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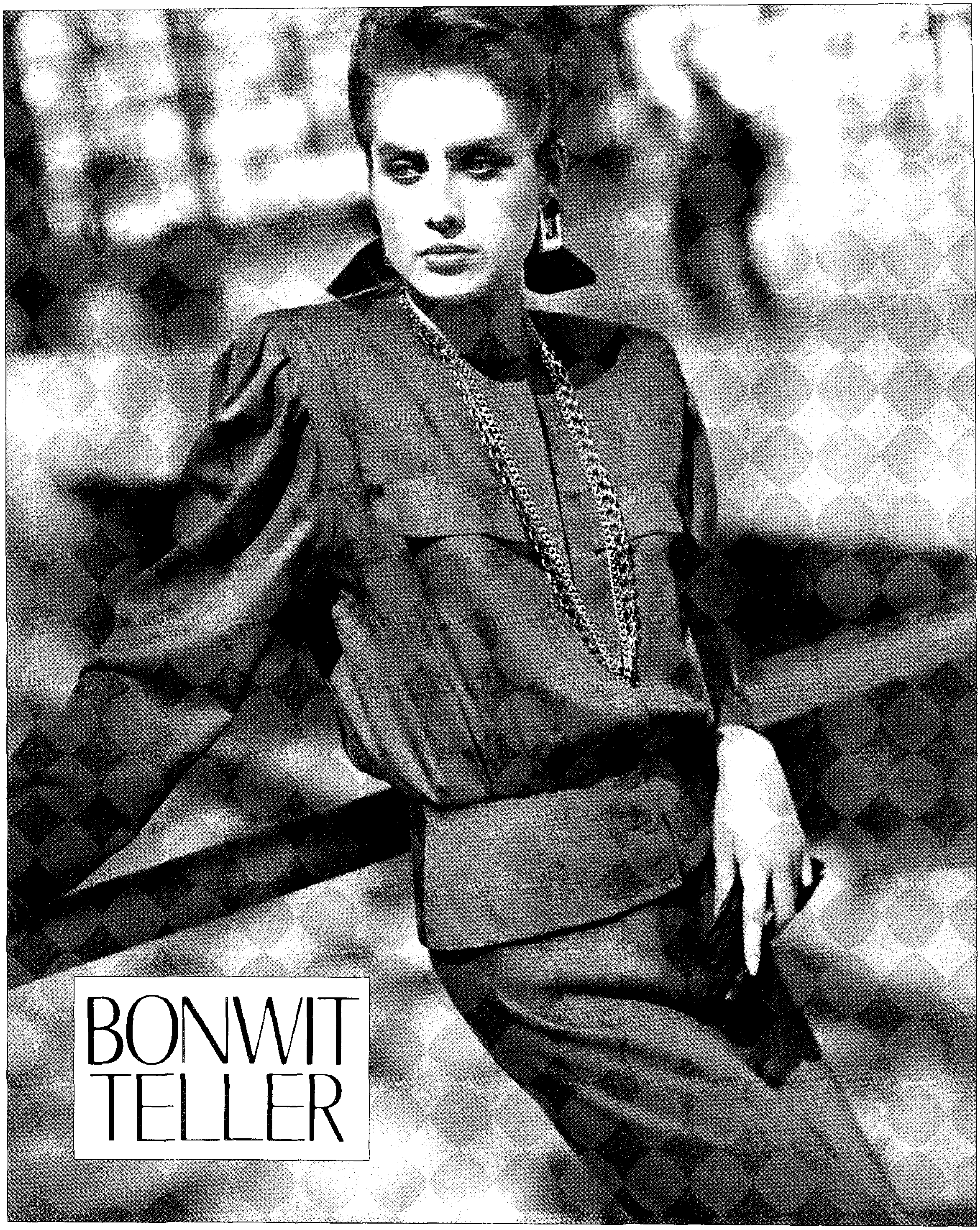

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Arsenic and Old Lace—This revival of a 1941 Broadway hit has a welcomely big cast and an exceptionally fine set by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg. The subject is murder, mingled with Victorian good manners; the murder weapon is elderberry wine. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/7/86.) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Cuba and His Teddy Bear—Robert De Niro is a Hispanic drug dealer (cocaine), who is bringing up his teen-age son. Reinaldo Povod's first play is considerably better than promising; Mr. De Niro's performance is remarkable, and he is well supported by Burt Young, Ralph Macchio, and Paul Calderon. Bill Hart directed. (6/2/86) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3 and Saturday, Aug. 9, at 2.)

Honky Tonk Nights—A musical directed and choreographed by Ernest O. Flatt, with a score by Michael Valenti and a book and lyrics by Ralph Allen and David Campbell. Previews Wednesday, Aug. 6. Opens officially on Thursday, Aug. 7. (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The House of Blue Leaves—A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy with Swoosie Kurtz, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the acute, perceptive director. (3/31/86) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting William H. Smith's **THE DRUNKARD.** (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Me and My Girl—A 1937 London musical by Noel Gay (music) and L. Arthur Rose and Douglas Furber (book and lyrics), with a revised book by Stephen Fry. The cast is headed by Robert Lindsay, Maryann Plunkett, and George S. Irving, and the director is Mike Ockrent. Previews through Saturday, Aug. 9. Opens officially on Sunday, Aug. 10. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Mummenschanz—A return engagement by the mime-and-mask trio. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Mystery of Edwin Drood—Charles Dickens died in the midst of writing the novel that has served as a basis for this jolly, silly musical, with charming songs by Rupert Holmes, an excellent cast headed by George Rose, and uninhibited direction by Wilford Leach. (12/16/85) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Nunsense—A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Sheridan Square Playhouse, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Olympus on My Mind—A musical with a score by Grant Sturiale and book, lyrics, and direction by Barry Harman. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Perfect Party—A. R. Gurney, Jr.,'s deliberately mannered comedy about a professor who is obsessed with perfection is often disappointing, but just as often Mr. Gurney's wit and high spirits break through the Wildean mold to redeem it. The acting by John Cunningham, Debra Mooney, and Charlotte Moore is very good. John Tillinger directed. (4/14/86) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sills & Company—The return of Severn Darden, along with several other distinguished alumni of Paul Sills' "Second City" in Chicago, in an evening of cheerful improvisation. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Social Security—An exceptionally attractive cast—Marlo Thomas, Ron Silver, Joanna Gleason, Olympia Dukakis, and Stefan Schnabel—in a comedy by Andrew Bergman, directed by Mike Nichols. (4/28/86) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sweet Charity—Debbie Allen, well assisted by a big cast, stars in a revival of a musical that has come to seem an American classic. Bob Fosse is the director and choreographer, Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields provided the songs, and the scenery is by Robert Randolph. Hurrah for them all! (5/12/86) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Today I Am a Fountain Pen—A play by Israel Horovitz. (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** A musical about Huckleberry Finn and Jim and their adventures on the Mississippi. The large cast is full of charm and so is the scenery, by Heidi Landesman. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A big, handsomely designed and handsomely costumed musical. The book, by Harvey Fierstein, is sentimental nonsense, but the music, by Jerry Herman, is pleasantly tuneful. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for many more years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,936 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **PENN & TELLER:** A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE:** Lily Tomlin alone onstage but impersonating a remarkably varied cast of characters, provided for her by Jane Wagner. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **SONG & DANCE:** Bernadette Peters sings a lot and Victor Barbee dances a lot, but their labors are fruitless—this is a musical without a story and almost without any characters. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, lyrics by Don Black. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

MISCELLANY

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1986—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

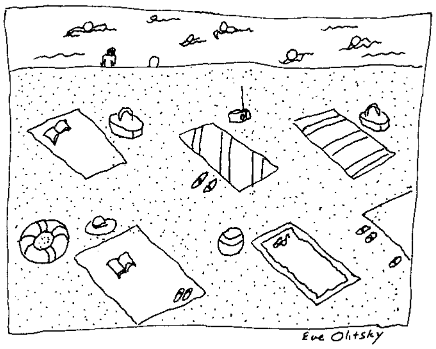
PILAR RIOJA—Programs of Spanish classical and flamenco dance. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 13-15, at 8.)

CLARK CENTER SUMMER DANCE FESTIVAL '86—The final program will feature Carmen de Lavallade, the George Faison Dancers, Lenore Latimer, and the Charles Moore Dance Theatre. (Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 7-9, at 8. For information about tickets, call 246-4818.)

DANCE THEATRE WORKSHOP—Programs of contemporary dance—**WIL SWANSON AND DANCERS:** Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 7-9, at 8. . . . **STEVE KRIECKHAUS:** Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 11-12, at 8. . . . **DEBORAH ANDERSEN:** Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 14-16, at 8. (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)



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ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Montgomery, Plant & Stritch are a vocal group. Their first names are Sharon, Rebecca, and Billy (he also plays piano), and they are singing Mercer, Frishberg, Loesser, and Manilow in the Oak Room. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. Saxophonist Ira Jackson and his trio will be on hand on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 8-9, and **CECIL PAYNE,** a bebop baritone saxophonist who also plays the flute, will bring in his trio the following Friday and Saturday, Aug. 15-16. The rest of the nights are given over to other combos. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool, carpeted, neat-as-a-pin music room, which will also be smokeless during **BLOSSOM DEARIE'S** early-bird concerts. They begin at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays, and are over before darkness falls upon the un-beautiful Fashion Institute of Technology, right across the street. Night owls can listen to singer Helen Schneider at nine Tuesdays through Saturdays, and to Sandra Reaves-Phillips at eleven Thursdays through Saturdays. Daytime TV star Candice Earley sings on Monday nights at eight-thirty.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this club, there is a little neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon the RCA Building—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. The radiant vibraharpist **MILT JACKSON** and his longtime partner, bassist **RAY BROWN,** will be here with their quartet through Sunday, Aug. 10; baritone saxophonist **RONNIE CUBER** and his All-Stars drop in on Monday, Aug. 11; and the **MANGIONE** brothers (pianist **GAP** and flugelhornist **CHUCK**) will make fraternal music beginning Tuesday, Aug. 12. Shows from nine. Tuesdays through Sundays after the last set until the heeltap of the night (about 4 A.M.), Jazz Messenger Jean Toussaint leads a band. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The varied lineup: Wednesdays, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Friday, Aug. 8, the cosmically inclined **SUN RA** & his Omniverse Jet Set Arkestra; Friday and Saturday, Aug. 15-16, singer, songwriter, and satirist **LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III,** whose victims include singer, songwriter, and satirist **LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great, up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists and bassists. **STEVE KUHN** and **BUSTER WILLIAMS** collaborate through Saturday, Aug. 9; **KENNY WERNER** fills in on Sunday, Aug. 10; and **JACK WILSON** and **BOOTS MALESON** settle in on Monday, Aug. 11. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Everything about this little club is nice: the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux and Withers' gabled Victorian courthouse. **OSCAR BROWN, JR.,** sings here at nine and eleven through Sunday, Aug. 10, and organist **RICHARD (GROOVE) HOLMES** and his trio move in on Tuesday, Aug. 12. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—In the Bemelmans Bar you can listen to **DICK WELLSTOOD,** who not long ago was practicing law and is now, of course, back on the piano bench, practicing his own rocking brand of stride. He plays Mondays through Fridays from nine-thirty to one.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Sundays and Mondays are showcase nights. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, down a long, narrow, fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding that you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you will find this comfortable room, where soul-style keyboardist **LES MC CANN** is performing Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 7-10; guitarist **PAT MARTINO** and his trio will be present on Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 12-13; and gospel-soul singer **CISSY HOUSTON** begins a four-night stand on Thursday, Aug. 14. Mondays belong to puckish guitarist **LES PAUL** and his trio. Sets begin at nine. Dining. Closed Wednesday, Aug. 6.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—**MICHELE BAUTIER** is ensconced in this Turtle Bay club, singing Berlin, Ellington, Joe Raposo, and others, all very convincingly. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A former truck warehouse, where palm trees have a lot of room to grow and non-trucking types go to eat non-trucking food and listen to good pianists (solo or with a bassist). Through Saturday, Aug. 9, **ARMEN DONELIAN** and **STEVE LA SPINA;** Monday through Wednesday, Aug. 11-13, Peter Malinverni; and Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 14-16, Michael Weiss and Peter Washington. Sets begin at seven Mondays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Wednesdays through Saturdays, pianist-singer **BOB DOROUGH** and bassist **BILL TAKAS** hold forth; Sundays and Mondays, Joe Derise sings and plays piano with accompaniment from bassist John Dooley; and Tuesdays guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE,** pianist **WARREN CHIASSON,** and bassist **MICHAEL FLEMING** collaborate. All these groups begin about ten.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy bar and back-room restaurant with a piano in it. **RALPH SUTTON** will be on hand through Saturday, Aug. 9, and **ROGER KELLAWAY** goes to work on Tuesday, Aug. 12. **DICK HYMAN** is the Monday guy, and Jim Badzik plays ragtime and boogie-woogie on Sundays. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Turn-of-the-century New York Sunday *Herald* posters, First World War posters, and Hirschfeld caricatures on the walls, and, next to the brass-railed partition between the bar and the dining room, a modern Steinway, which **FRED HERSCH,** who is slender, bearded, and a fine neo-romantic pianist, plays through Saturday, Aug. 9. (Bassist **MICHAEL FORMANEK** accompanies him.) **ROLAND HANNA,** who is round, goateed, and buoyant, takes over on Tuesday, Aug. 12. Music from about nine-thirty.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-

1664)—No, this isn't the Department of Rockabilly at the New School. It's a degentrified Schrafft's where the authentic Texas ambience is more representative of Austin than of Houston or Dallas. The folk, country, blues, and rock: Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 6-7, bluesman **ALBERT KING** and Robert Ross; Friday and Saturday, Aug. 8-9, the Flying Burrito Brothers; Sunday, Aug. 10, blues harpist **PAUL BUTTERFIELD**; Tuesday, Aug. 12, **JUNIOR WALKER** & the All-Stars; and Friday and Saturday, Aug. 15-16, the New Riders of the Purple Sage. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**ANITA O'DAY** (who sang with Gene Krupa's and Stan Kenton's bands in the forties) and **CHRIS CONNOR** (who sang with Kenton in the fifties) are singing together at nine and eleven through Saturday, Aug. 9; starting Tuesday, Aug. 12, **JACKIE CAIN** and **ROY KRAL** will concentrate on the songs of the late Alan Jay Lerner. Their shows are at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. On most Mondays, Woody Allen sits in on clarinet with a New Orleans-style outfit after nine-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—The music scene here is cooler than a Columbus Avenue gelato and the music—jazz and rhythm and blues and Latin jazz—hotter than a Columbus Avenue taco. The lineup: through Thursday, Aug. 7, **MICHEL CAMILO'S** trio; Friday, Aug. 8, **ART BLAKEY** & the Jazz Messengers; Saturday, Aug. 9, **JERRY GONZALEZ** & the Fort Apache Band; Monday, Aug. 11, the Doug Monroe trio; Tuesday, Aug. 12, Justin Page; and Friday and Saturday, Aug. 15-16, **MC COY TYNER.** Music from about ten until two. Dining.

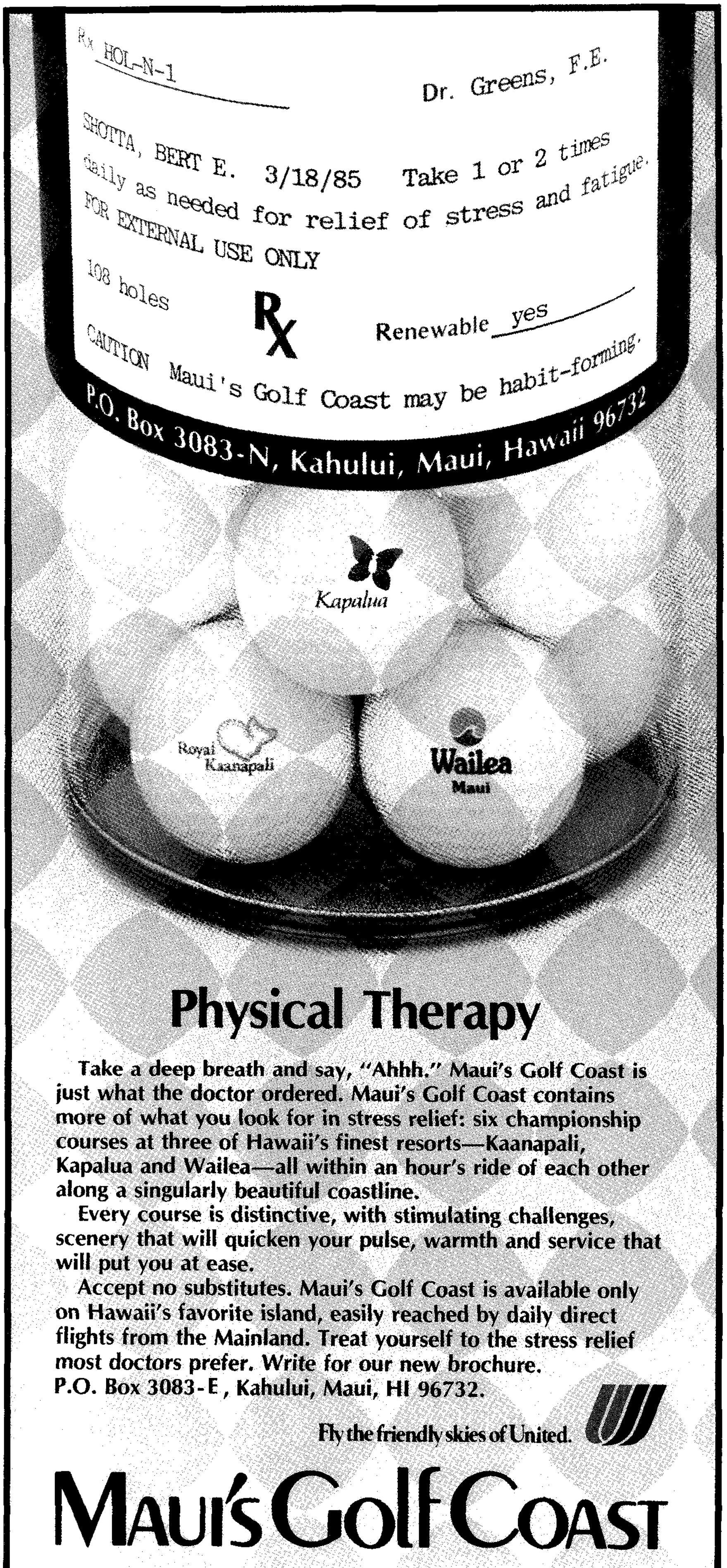
Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock from the fifties to the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom. Thursday and Friday, Aug. 7-8, **SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY** and the Jukes; Saturday, Aug. 9, GBH, the Cro-Mags, and 7 Seconds; Thursday, Aug. 14, Icehouse; Friday, Aug. 15, Psychic T.V.; and Saturday, Aug. 16, Book of Love. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven. Dancing.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to Brazilian, Caribbean, and African music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, reggaeists, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 6-7, **WILLIE COLON**; Friday and Saturday, Aug. 8-9, and Friday, Aug. 15, **LOREMIL MACHADO**; Tuesday, Aug. 12, saxophonist **OLIVER LAKE** and **KELVYN BELL**; Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 13-14, **MUTABARUKA**; Saturday, Aug. 16, **MIKATA.** Music Tuesdays through Thursdays from nine, and Fridays and Saturdays from eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Bassist **RICHARD DAVIS** and his quintet (trumpeter **CECIL BRIDGEWATER,** tenor saxophonist **RICKY FORD,** pianist **ROLAND HANNA,** and drummer **FREDDIE WAITS**) will be on the bandstand through Sunday, Aug. 10; the Cape Town pianist **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM** and his group, **EKAYA,** set sail on Tuesday, Aug. 12; and **DAKOTA STATON** sings with a trio on Mondays. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A low-ceilinged, plain-but-functional blues and rock outpost. The decorative flourishes include pictures of Joe Turner, a Mets pennant, roadhouse neon, and a cat, which can sometimes be found atop the jukebox. The schedule: Thursday, Aug. 7, Lew Willie & the Snapdragons; Fridays and Saturdays, Aug. 8-9 and Aug. 15-16, **BUSTER POINDEXTER** (who can be heard on the jukebox under his other name, David Johansen) **& THE BANSHEES OF BLUE**; Sunday, Aug. 10, Kristi Rose & the Dying Breed; Monday, Aug. 11, **JUMP STREET**; and Thursday, Aug. 14, **ELLIOTT MURPHY** (who can be heard on the jukebox under his only name). Music after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Salsa in the downstairs room on Monday, Aug. 11, after nine-thirty, will be provided by three pianists—**EDDIE PALMIERI, MICHEL CAMILO,** and **BILLY TAYLOR**—and, in the case of the first two, their bands. On Sundays, at nine-thirty and twelve-thirty, the **SKATALITES** will fill the air with Jamaican music. Dancing under the spinning, mirrored ball. . . . ¶ The Terrace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Bar here is yet another worthy piano-bass platform. **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** work together nightly, except Mondays. In addition, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** plays Tuesdays with her combo. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world are attracted to this famous, unpretentious basement establishment, the standard for jazz clubs everywhere. Tenor saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON'S** quartet, featuring **JIM MC NEELY** and **AL FOSTER,** will be in residence through Sunday, Aug. 10, and starting on Tuesday, Aug. 12, you can get in line to hear the brilliant young French pianist **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI.** Monday night is still **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** night. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food (Columbia University is just across Broadway), beyond the pinball machines is a room full of live jazz, comedy, and students. Pianist **LARRY WILLIS** and his trio will cheer up summer-school grinds (and non-academics, too) through Saturday, Aug. 9, and tenor saxophonist **GEORGE KELLY & THE JAZZ SULTANS** swing into action on Wednesday, Aug. 13. Mondays are comedy nights. Shows nightly from about nine.

WHIPPOORWILL, 18 E. 18th St. (675-7100)—The entryway to this downstairs club buzzes with black lights, the anteroom features a mural and a chaise longue on which to contemplate it, and the music-and-dining room has jazz. Trumpeter **DOC CHEATHAM** and pianist **JAY MC SHANN** head up a quartet through Sunday, Aug. 10, and on Tuesday, Aug. 12, **DAVID MURRAY,** a very exciting saxophonist and composer, brings in *his* quartet. Mondays are reserved for trumpeter Tex Allen's sextet. Sets begin at nine-thirty.... ¶ The roomy upstairs bar and restaurant called Joanna (675-7900) has big mirrors, huge photographs of flowers, real flower-size flowers, and a grand piano, over which **KENNY KIRKLAND** will preside through Sunday, Aug. 10; the inventive, elusive bop pianist **BARRY HARRIS** takes charge on Tuesday, Aug. 12. Music from about nine-thirty.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and expert musicians in it. **JOHN BUNCH** and **MICHAEL MOORE** play piano-bass duets through Saturday, Aug. 9, and **HAROLD DANKO** and **JACK WILKINS** will engage in piano-guitar duets starting Monday, Aug. 11. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

ZIGGY MARLEY & THE MELODY MAKERS, I-THREES, NADINE SUTHERLAND, and 809 BAND—Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday, Aug. 8, at 8.

ROBIN WILLIAMS—Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 9-10, at 8:30.

REGGAE CONSCIOUSNESS—Bunny Wailer, Sly & Robbie, the Radics, and others. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Saturday, Aug. 16, at 8.)

JAZZ CULTURAL THEATRE—Friday, Aug. 8: Cecil Payne and the Frank Hewitt trio.... ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9: Harold Vick quartet.... ¶ Friday and Saturday, Aug. 15-16: Junior Cook–Bill Hardman quintet. (Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Shows at 10, 11:30, and 1.)

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ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN—Four large recent sculptures, plus smaller works. Through Sept. 12. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St. Closed Mondays.)

JAN GROTH / GERHARD RICHTER—Large black-and-white tapestries, plus pencil drawings, complement a show of the artist's work at the Guggenheim. / Abstract paintings on paper. Through Friday, Aug. 8. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

ROBIN HILL / HANNAH VILLIGER—Abstract sculptures in wax, both natural and pigmented. / The artist's own body is the subject of her photographs. Through Aug. 27. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

ROBERT ISRAEL—Ink drawings of costume designs for "Vienna: Lusthaus" and for the Seattle Opera's production of the Ring Cycle. Through Friday, Aug. 15. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

YUKIMURA S. KONISHI—Abstract oils painted in pastel colors and with a hint of Constructivist feeling, plus paper collages. Through Saturday, Aug. 16. (Humphrey, 242 E. 5th St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

THOMAS SCHINDLER—Heavily symbolic oil paintings, bringing together bits of armor, a crown of thorns, massive nails, an artist's palette, strands of barbed wire. Through Friday, Aug. 15. (Sharpe, 175 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens Wednesdays through Sundays at 1.)

THE DOG DAYS OF AUGUST—A lively summer show in which every dog has his day, if that's not putting too fine a point on it. Paintings, sculptures, and photographs by Willie Cole, Larry Holmes, John Kindness, William Wegman, and others. Through Aug. 20. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **CENTER FOR AFRICAN ART,** 54 E. 68th St.: "African Aesthetics: The Carlo Monzino Collection," comprising works in wood, mainly, but also in gold, ivory, bronze, stone, and terra-cotta, and including the famous "Black Venus." Through Sept. 7. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays; open Sundays, noon to 5.) . . . **FRUMKIN,** 50 W. 57th St.: Works on paper by ten gallery artists and ten invited artists, among them William Beckman, William T. Wiley, Jo Anne Carson, and Jim Gingerich. Through Friday, Aug. 15.... **GALERIE ST. ETIENNE,** 24 W. 57th St.: A show that complements the "Vienna 1900" exhibit at the Modern; works on paper, including prints, by Klimt, Schiele, and Kokoschka. Through Sept. 12. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **HOFFELD,** 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Drawings, paintings, and sculptures by twentieth-century artists. Through Sept. 26.... **TATISTCHEFF,** 50 W. 57th St.: Two painters new to the gallery, Margaret Bowland (portraits) and Harry Orlyk (plein-air landscapes), are represented along with regular members. Through Friday, Aug. 15.... **YORK,** 21 E. 65th St.: Two dozen paintings by nineteenth- and twentieth-century American artists, including landscapes by Heade, Kensett, and Twachtman, flower studies by O'Keeffe and Joseph Stella, and a portrait of Frances de Forest by William Merritt Chase. Through Sept. 20.

¶ Exhibitions of works by gallery members can also be seen at: **BLUM HELMAN,** 20 W. 57th St.... **COOPER,** 155 Wooster St.... **DAVIS & LANGDALE,** 231 E. 60th St.... **FISCHBACH,** 24 W. 57th St.... **HOFFMAN,** 429 West Broadway. . . . **MIDTOWN,** 11 E. 57th St.... **ROBERT MILLER,** 41 E. 57th St.... **PERLOW,** 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.

SCULPTURE—An all-American all-abstraction selection, with pieces by Bourgeois, Calder, Wilmarth, Joel Fisher, and others. Through Friday, Aug. 15. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

WENDELL MACRAE (1896-1980)—Prints of New York in the thirties and forties by an artist who was a staff photographer for Rockefeller Center during its construction. Through Aug. 22. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

JAY MAISEL / TODD WEBB—Large-scale photographs of the American landscape over the past thirty years. / Photographs concentrating on New York and Paris and dating from 1945 to 1960. Through Sept. 7. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

JOHN MARGOLIES—Photographs of, broadly, resorts along the Atlantic Coast, but including such particulars as gaudy miniature-golf parks. Through Friday, Aug. 15. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St.)

ROSALIND SOLOMON—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a show of prints by an artist who has found a connection between, for instance, a Santa on duty in the Northgate Mall in Chattanooga, Tennessee, a *condomblê* initiation in Brazil, and a wedding in Burma. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

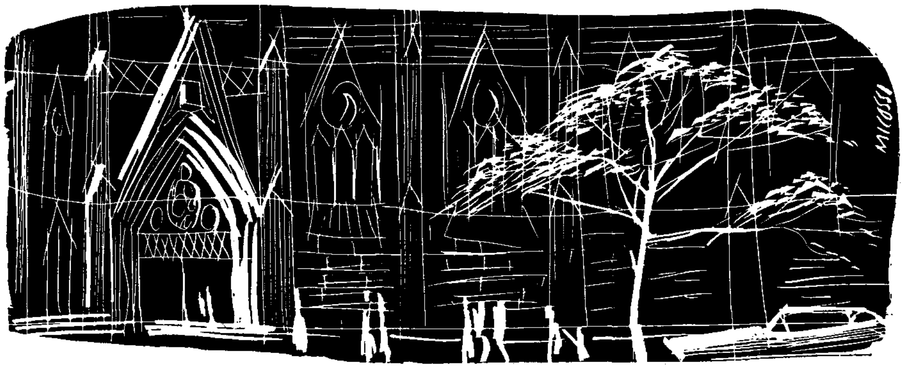
GROUP SHOW—Mostly contemporary photographs centering on sporting activities—rodeos, football, hunting, fishing. Eadweard Muybridge, Garry Winogrand, Nancy Dwyer, Stephen Frailey, and others. Through Aug. 29. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Japanese color woodblocks, reflecting the impression Westerners made on late-nineteenth-century Japanese artists. Lincoln Kirstein gave these prints to the museum. Through Sept. 7.... ¶ "Costumes of Royal India," an extravaganza of garments and accessories evoking palaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through Aug. 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Vienna 1900: Art, Architecture & Design," an exhibit that cuts a wide swath through a pivotal period in the early history of modernism in Europe. Paintings and drawings by Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele, and others; Vienna Secession posters; and decorative arts from the Wiener Werkstätte, among them a wrought-silver vitrine by C. O. Czeschka. Through Oct. 21.... ¶ A comprehensive selection of prints by Jasper Johns. Through Aug. 19.... **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Prints by Rosalind Solomon. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10, with popular turn-of-the-century Viennese music performed by an ensemble of Juilliard alumni.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Expressive Figure from Rousseau to Bacon," paintings, sculptures, and works on paper that are based on the figure but were



done during the rise of abstractionism. . . . ¶ A small show of sculptures and collages by Louise Nevelson, including an environmental piece called "The Floral Garden," which the artist recently gave to the museum. . . . ¶ A display of six large-scale tapestries by Norwegian artist Jan Groth, and related drawings in crayon. A complementary show (ending Friday, Aug. 8) is at the Marian Goodman Gallery, 24 W. 57th St. All museum shows through Sept. 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of large-scale paintings by James Rosenquist, including many of his Pop Art works. Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ Shaker design, exemplified by furniture, textiles, farming equipment, cooking utensils, etc., plus watercolors done as religious tokens. Through Aug. 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of forty prints by the photographer Joel-Peter Witkin, whose work is characterized by erotic and fantastic imagery. Through Sept. 22. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—An exhibit of recent North American Indian textiles, pottery, baskets, jewelry, and carvings. Through Oct. 5. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Hollywood: Legend and Reality," a show about the nuts-and-bolts aspects of the film industry over the years. The displays include original production designs (a matte painting by Albert Whitlock for "The Birds"), costume sketches and costumes (the matador suit Rudolph Valentino wore in "Blood and Sand," the picnic dress Vivien Leigh wore in "Gone with the Wind"), set models (a tabletop model city for "Blade Runner"), posters, about two hundred photographs, documents (a pithy memo on character development from F. Scott Fitzgerald to David O. Selznick), and, from the Xanadu of Hollywood's prop room, the sled from "Citizen Kane" and the piano from "Casablanca." Through Oct. 12. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—Twenty-four contemporary American artists have looked to Jewish history and interpreted it in paintings, sculptures, graphics, and photographs. Bill Thompson's fourteen-foot-wide photocollage of an Auschwitz gas chamber, Audrey Flack's Photo-Realist rendering of a Margaret Bourke-White photograph of survivors of Buchenwald, Rodney Ripps's abstract canvas of the land of Israel, and Ann Sperry's welded-steel sculpture entitled "The Creation; Seven Days" are included. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—Forty-three paintings of animals and birds commissioned from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italian, Flemish, and Dutch artists by various Medicis, whose courtyards seem to have been enlivened by pheasants, two-headed lambs, storks, and, of course, lapdogs and hunting dogs. On loan from the Pitti Palace. Through Sept. 7. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Damaged Goods" is the provocative title of a show about glamorous-looking consumer products which visitors enter through Justen Ladda's gantlet of extended arms (they are attached to pedestals crowned with jello), emerging into a gallery of familiar objects pressed into unfamiliar contexts. Through Sunday, Aug. 10. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—About seventy specimens of botanical illustration are displayed in books, prints, magazines, drawings, and watercolors: the laurel tree of Carolina (*Magnolia altissima*) from Catesby's volume "The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands" (1731-43); lilies and azaleas from Paxton's *Magazine of Botany* (nineteenth century); paintings and drawings by Asher Durand, Baroness Hyde de Neuville, and others. Through Oct. 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Peter Rose (performance), Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 7-10, at 8. . . . ¶ Kestutis Nakas (performance), Fridays and Saturdays, Aug. 8-9 and 15-16, at 10:30. . . . ¶ Toby MacLennan (film), Friday through Sunday, Aug. 15-17, at 9.

MUSIC

New York City Opera—Wednesday, Aug. 6, at 8: "Don Quichotte," with Victoria Vergara, Samuel Ramey, and Joseph McKee; conducted by Mario Bernardi. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 7, at 8: "Werther," with Claudette Peterson, Wendy White, Jerry Hadley, and William Stone; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8, at 8: "Carmen," with Susanne Marsee, Margaret Cusack, John Absalom, and Robert McFarland; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 2: "Die Fledermaus" (in English), with Leigh Munro, Claudette Peterson, Michael Cousins, and Theodore Baerg; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Maria Spacagna, Jane Shaulis, Richard Leech, and Robert McFarland; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 12, at 8: "Don Quichotte," with Victoria Vergara, Samuel Ramey, and Joseph McKee; Mario Bernardi. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 13, at 8: "Die Fledermaus" (in English), with Leigh Munro, Claudette Peterson, Michael Cousins, and Theodore Baerg; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14, at 8: "Carmen," with Cynthia Rose, Elizabeth Hynes, Robert Grayson, and Stanley Wexler; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15, at 8: "Cendrillon," with Faith Esham, Erie Mills, Susanne Marsee, and William Parker; Mario Bernardi. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 2: "Werther," with Claudette Peterson, Wendy White, Jerry Hadley, and William Stone; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 8: "Don Quichotte," with Victoria Vergara, Samuel Ramey, and Joseph McKee; Mario Bernardi. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Nov. 16.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—A seven-week season of orchestral, chamber-music, and recital programs, which start at 8, with pre-concert recitals at 7—Wednesday, Aug. 6: Charles Mackerras conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Richard Goode, piano, and Heinz Holliger, oboe. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 7: Mr. Holliger and a wind ensemble from the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, Aug. 8-9: Charles Mackerras conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Alicia de Larrocha, piano. . . . ¶ Monday, Aug. 11: Christopher Hogwood conducting an ensemble performing on original instruments, with Emma Kirkby, soprano; Stanley Ritchie, baroque violin; and Stephen Hammer, oboe. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 12-13: Sergiu Comissiona conducting the orchestra, with Horacio Gutiérrez, piano, and Ralph Kirshbaum, cello. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14, and Saturday, Aug. 16: Gerard Schwarz conducting the orchestra in a concert version of Mozart's opera "La Finta Giardiniera," with Margaret Chalker, Kaaren Erickson, and Cheryl Parrish, all sopranos; Della Jones, mezzo-soprano; Michael Myers and Rockwell Blake, tenors; and Thomas Hampson, baritone. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15: Sergiu Comissiona conducting the orchestra, with Bella Davidovich, piano, and Paul Ingraham, horn. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Through Saturday, Aug. 23.)

IN THE COUNTRY

Tanglewood Festival—Thursday, Aug. 7, at 8:30: Joseph Silverstein, violin, and Peter Serkin, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8, at 7: The Copley Trio in a Schubert-Dohnányi pro-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

gram. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8, at 9: Gunther Herbig conducting the Boston Symphony, with Yo-Yo Ma, cello. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 2: A Beethoven-Ravel-Brahms program, performed by Isaac Stern and Cho-Liang Lin, violin; Michael Tree and Jaime Laredo, viola; Mr. Ma and Matt Haimovitz, cello; and Emanuel Ax, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 8:30: Gunther Herbig conducting the Boston Symphony in a Mozart-Bruckner program, with Horacio Gutiérrez, piano. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 10, at 2:30: Sergiu Comissiona conducting, with Malcolm Lowe, violin, and Burton Fine, viola. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 10, at 8:30: The Messrs. Stern, Lin, Tree, Laredo, Ma, Haimovitz, and Ax in a Kodály-Brahms program. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 12, at 8:30: The Boston Symphony Chamber Players and Gilbert Kalish, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14, at 8:30: Christopher Hogwood conducting an ensemble performing on original instruments and playing the harpsichord, with Emma Kirkby, soprano; Stanley Ritchie, baroque violin; and Stephen Hammer, oboe. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15, at 7: Jerome Rosen, violin; Jonathan Miller, cello; and David Deveau, piano, in a Mozart-Dvořák program. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15, at 9: Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting the Boston Symphony in an all-Tchaikovsky program, with Viktoria Postnikova, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 8:30: Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting a Prokofiev-Shostakovich program, with Miss Postnikova and Charles Schlueter, trumpet. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 17, at 2:30: Christopher Hogwood directing an all-Mozart program, with Arleen Augér, soprano; Carolyn Watkinson, mezzo-soprano; John Aler, tenor; John Cheek, bass-baritone; and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. (Lenox, Mass. Through Sunday, Aug. 31. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1666.)

CARAMOOR FESTIVAL—Friday, Aug. 8, at 9: Christopher Parkening, classical guitarist. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 8:30: Julius Rudel conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's in an all-Mozart program, with Stephen Hough, piano, and Stewart Rose, horn. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 10, at 5:30: Youri Egorov, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15, at 9: Garrick Ohlsson, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 8:30: The New York Chamber Soloists; Hamao Fujiwara, violin; and Sharon Moe, horn, in a Mozart-Handel program. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 17, at 5:30: Arnold Steinhardt, violin; Michael Tree, viola; David Soyer, cello; and Lydia Artymiw, piano. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Sunday, Aug. 24. On Saturdays, trains leave Grand Central Terminal at 12:48, 2:48, and 5:48, and are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER—Opening performances by the **PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA** of a three-week season that will run through Saturday, Aug. 23. Wednesday, Aug. 6: Dennis Russell Davies conducting a Borodin–Lou Harrison–Rimsky-Korsakov program. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 7: Dennis Russell Davies conducting a Colin McPhee–Ravel–Puccini program, with Marc-André Hamelin, piano; Martina Arroyo, soprano; Jon Fredric West, tenor; and others. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8: Franz Allers conducting a program of operatic music, with Sherrill Milnes, baritone. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9: Dennis Russell Davies conducting and acting as piano soloist in a Haidu–Lou Harrison program, with Norman Carol, violin; Giora Feidman, clarinet; Miss Arroyo; Mr. West; and others. . . . [**NOTE:** Special concerts will be given by Psychedelic Furs and the Models on Sunday, Aug. 10; by Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band and the Fabulous Thunderbirds on Monday, Aug. 11; and by Stevie Nicks, with Peter Frampton, on Tuesday, Aug. 12.] . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 13: William Smith conducting a Lou Harrison–Beethoven–Rachmaninoff program, with David Bar-Illan, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14: Dennis Russell Davies conducting a program of music by Somei Satoh, Lou Harrison, Keith Jarrett, and Bartók, with Mr. Jarrett, piano, and Norman Carol, violin. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15: Erich Leinsdorf conducting a Mussorgsky-Liszt-Shostakovich program, with Alexander Toradze, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16: Erich Leinsdorf conducting a Smetana-Liszt-Stravinsky program, with Yefim Bronfman, piano. (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. Through Sunday, Sept. 7. For information about tickets, call 399-4444, in New York.)

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WATERLOO FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA—Gerard Schwarz conducting the last in a series of concerts, this one with Alexander Toradze, piano. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. 1-201 347-4700. Saturday, Aug. 9, at 8:30.)

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL—Programs of ballet and modern and ethnic dancing—Through Saturday, Aug. 9: The Trisha Brown Dance Company. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Saturday, Aug. 12-16: Thirteen dancers from the New York City Ballet in a program of new and repertory works. (Becket, Mass. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; and Saturdays at 2 and 8:30. Through Saturday, Aug. 30. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—**YANKEES** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Milwaukee, Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 6-7, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Kansas City, Friday, Aug. 8, at 7:30; Saturday, Aug. 9, at 2; and Sunday, Aug. 10, at 1:30. . . . ¶ Cleveland, Monday through Wednesday, Aug. 11-13, at 7:30. . . . **METS** at Shea Stadium: Vs. St. Louis, Thursday, Aug. 14, at 5:35 (twi-night doubleheader); Friday, Aug. 15, at 7:35; and Saturday, Aug. 16, at 2:20.

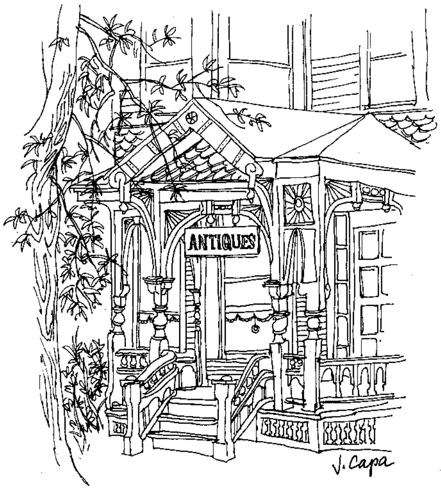
PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL—Jets vs. Cincinnati Bengals, in an exhibition game. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Saturday, Aug. 16, at 8.)

RACING—At **SARATOGA:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30; through Monday, Aug. 25. The Ballerina, Friday, Aug. 8; the Alabama, Saturday, Aug. 9; the Bernard Baruch Handicap, Sunday, Aug. 10; the Diana Handicap, Monday, Aug. 11; and the Travers, Saturday, Aug. 16. . . . **MONMOUTH PARK,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Saturday, Aug. 30. The Sapling, Saturday, Aug. 9, and the Philip H. Iselin Handicap, Saturday, Aug. 16. . . . **ATLANTIC CITY,** Mays Landing, N.J.: Weeknights at 7:30; through Saturday, Aug. 30. The United Nations Handicap, Saturday, Aug. 9.

TROTTING—At **ROOSEVELT RACEWAY,** Westbury: Nightly at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; through Saturday, Nov. 1. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Nov. 22. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 6-8, at 8, and Saturday, Aug. 9, at 12:30 and 8.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL—Free performances of the first two of three programs of Hispanic theatre, music, and dance. Through Sunday, Aug. 10: **LA VERDADERA HISTORIA DE PEDRO NAVAJA,** a musical from Puerto Rico's Teatro del Sesenta. . . . ¶ Wednesday through Sunday, Aug. 13-17: **JAZMINES,** a tango-ballet created by Argentina's Ana Maria Steckelman and performed by her company. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Evenings at 8. Through Monday, Aug. 25. For information about tickets, call 598-7155.)



CENTRAL PARK MALL—Performances in the 72nd Street Bandshell. Wednesday, Aug. 6, at 6: Dianne McIntyre's Sounds in Motion, with Olu Dara & the Okra Orchestra. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, at 3: The Pierson Orchestra. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 13, at 6: Monica Levy Performance Group and Mark Dendy and Company, with Mel Tomlinson. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 3: The Jorge Anders band.

MUSIC FESTIVAL ON THE PIER—The Miller beer people's summer series. Wednesday, Aug. 6: The Smiths and Phranc. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8: Chaka Khan and Colonel Abrams. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15: Psychedelic Furs and Blow Monkeys. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Evenings at 7:30; on Aug. 6, at 7. Through Saturday, Sept. 13. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

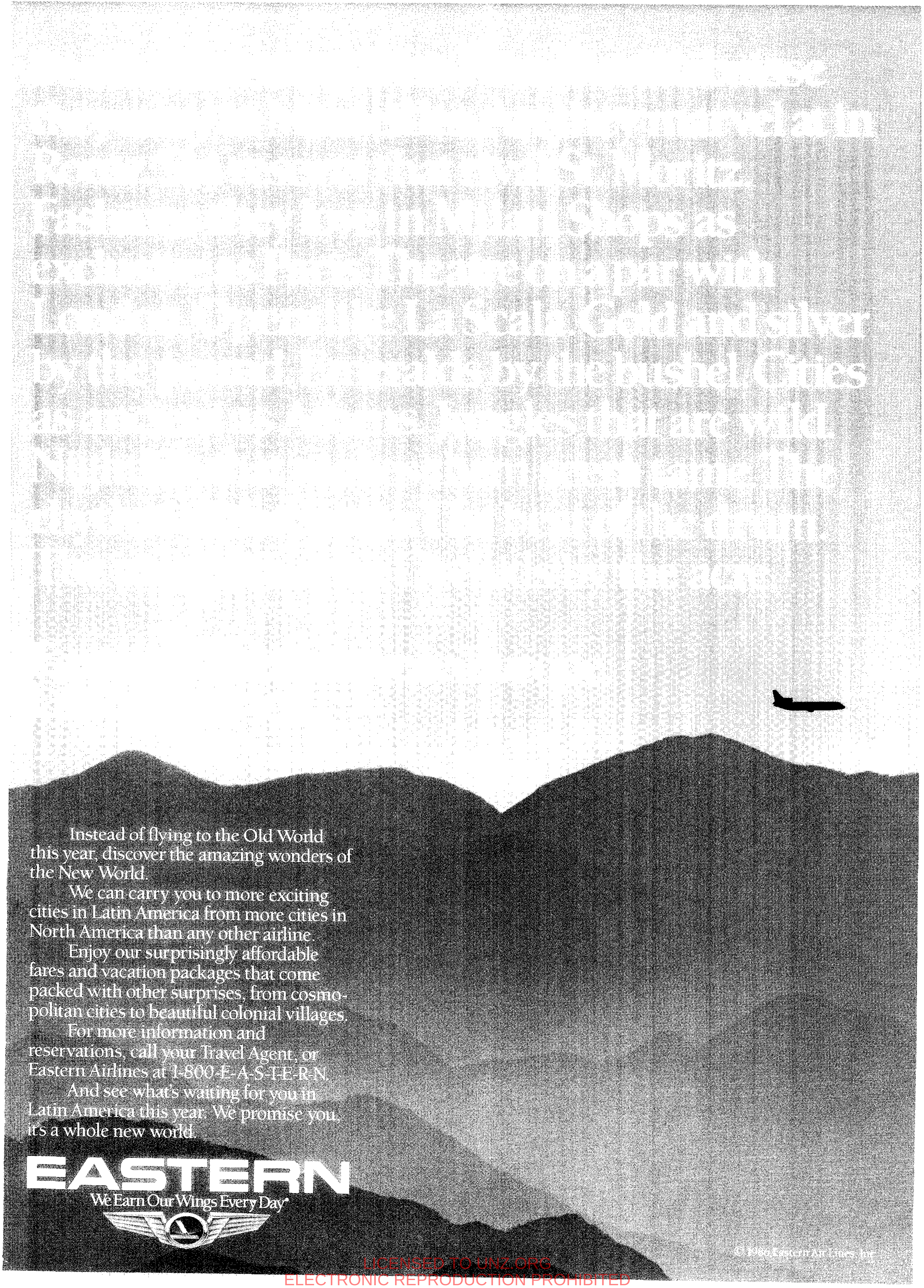
LINCOLN CENTER OUT-OF-DOORS—A four-week festival of dance, music, and street theatre. **DAMROSCH PARK:** Wednesday, Aug. 6, the Juilliard Dance Ensemble at 8:15. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 7-9, concert-version performances of "Sister Suzie Cinema," a doo-wop opera, with Fourteen Karat Soul, at 8:15. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 10, a Caribbean Music Day Carnival Parade will leave the Caribbean Cultural Center (408 W. 58th St.) at about 1 and arrive at the park at 2, in time for performances by numerous groups, including Ballet Folclorico Venezuela and the Calabash Reggae Orchestra; and Yomo Toro y su Conjunto at 8:15. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14, the Jay McShann quartet at 8:15. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, a program of Afro-Caribbean vocal and dance music at 8:15. . . . **LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA:** Thursday, Aug. 7, "Deadwood Dick, the Black Cowboy" (for children) at 10:30; Bobby Sanabria & Ascensión, with Claudio Roditi, at 12:15; and the Harmonie Brass Salute at 6:15. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 8, D. J. McDonald and Dancers at 5. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 9, the Chinese Dance Company of New York and the Chinese Dance Association at 2:30, and the Wendy Osserman Dance Company at 5. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 12, the Cleveland Eaton Trio and Voices at 12:15, and "Flowing Rocks, Still Waters," a multimedia work by Elaine Summers and the Experimental Intermedia Foundation, at 8. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 13, Middle Eastern music and dance by the Anahid Sofian Dance Company at 5. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 14, "The Wind in the Willows" (for children), by Puppets Unlimited, at 10:30. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 15, jazz group Crossing Point at 12:15, Renaissance dances by Novantiqua at 5, and the Mendelssohn String Quartet at 6:15. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, a program of comedy and magic, and clown Russell Brown (for children), at noon; "The Family" and "The Family in France," a French-American cabaret program, at 2; and the Mafata Dance Company at 5. (Through Monday, Sept. 1. For daily detailed information, call 877-2011.)

WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK—Charles Darden conducting the Festival Band. The last in a series of concerts. (Tuesday, Aug. 12, at 8. In the event of rain, the concert will take place in the Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl.)

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT—Free concerts on Pier 16. Saturday, Aug. 9, at 9: Steve Gadd, Richard Tee, Cornell Dupree, Randy Brecker, and Lou Marinie. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 16, at 9: Paul Butterfield and others. (East River at Fulton St.)

WALKING TOUR—A conducted tour of Murray Hill, sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. Sunday, Aug. 10, starting at the southwest corner of 33rd St. and Fifth Ave., at 1:30. (For information about tickets, call 534-1672.)

PERSEID METEOR SHOWERS—The annual display of meteors, for the benefit of nocturnal-sky watchers and shooting-star wishers. The best night for watching is Monday, Aug. 11, after midnight, when, if the weather is at all coöperative, as many as fifty meteors an hour may be visible.



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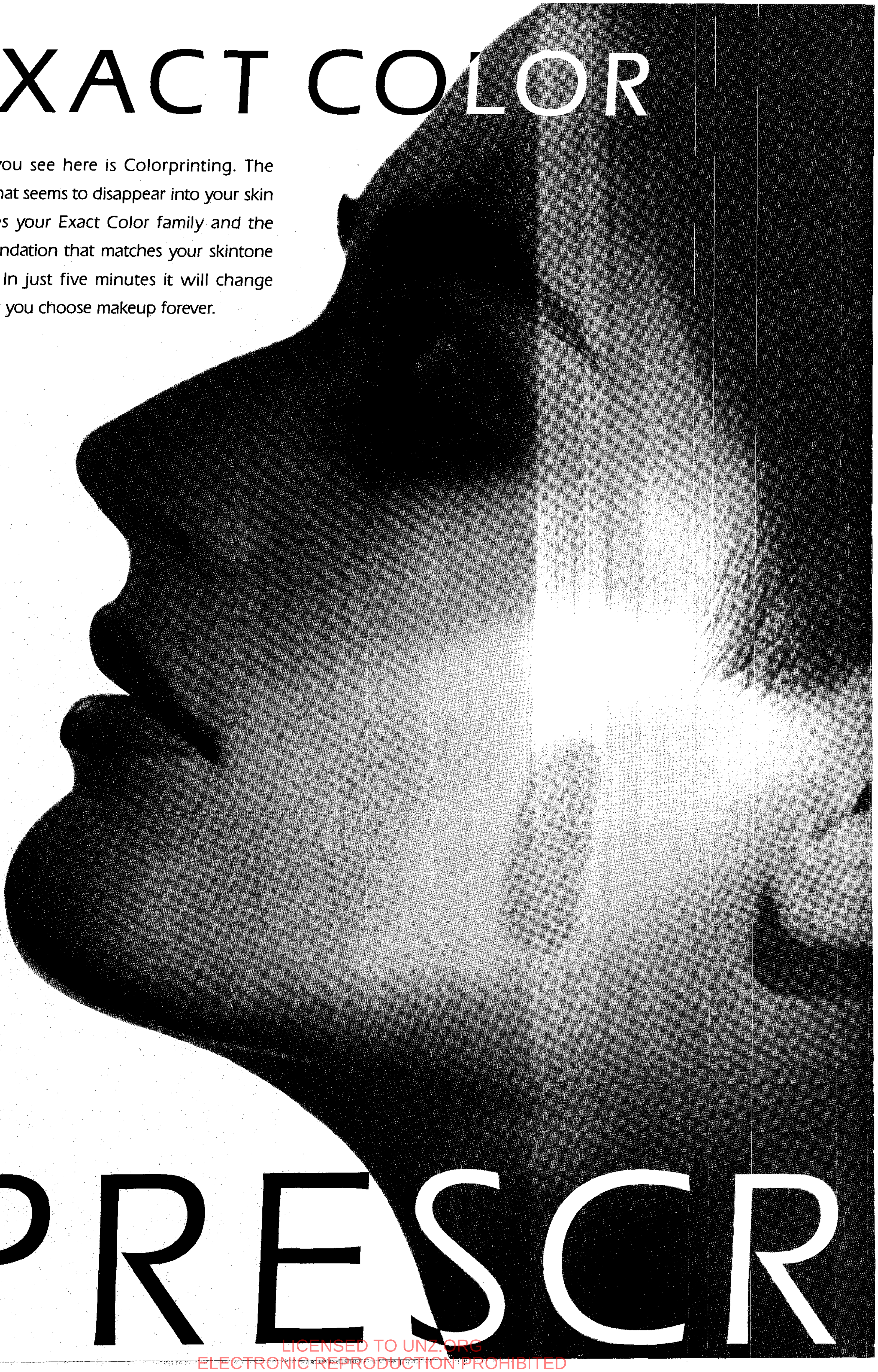

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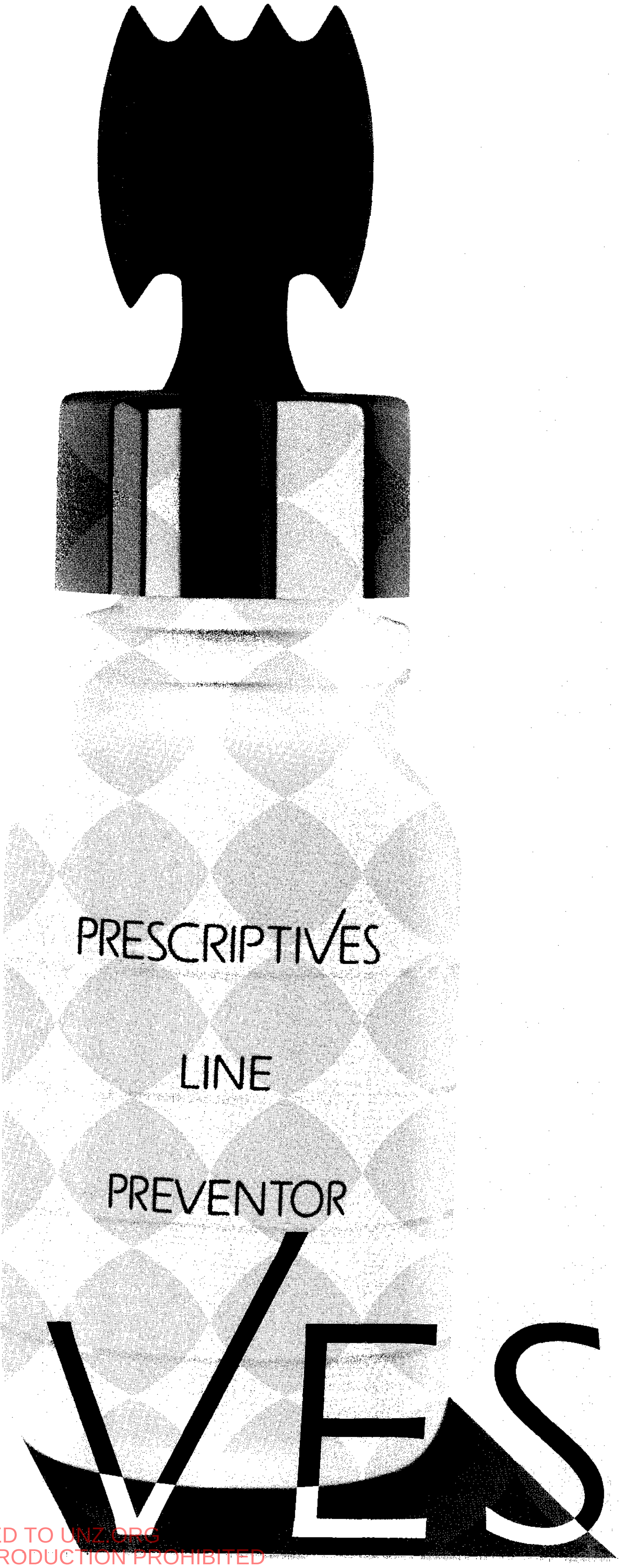

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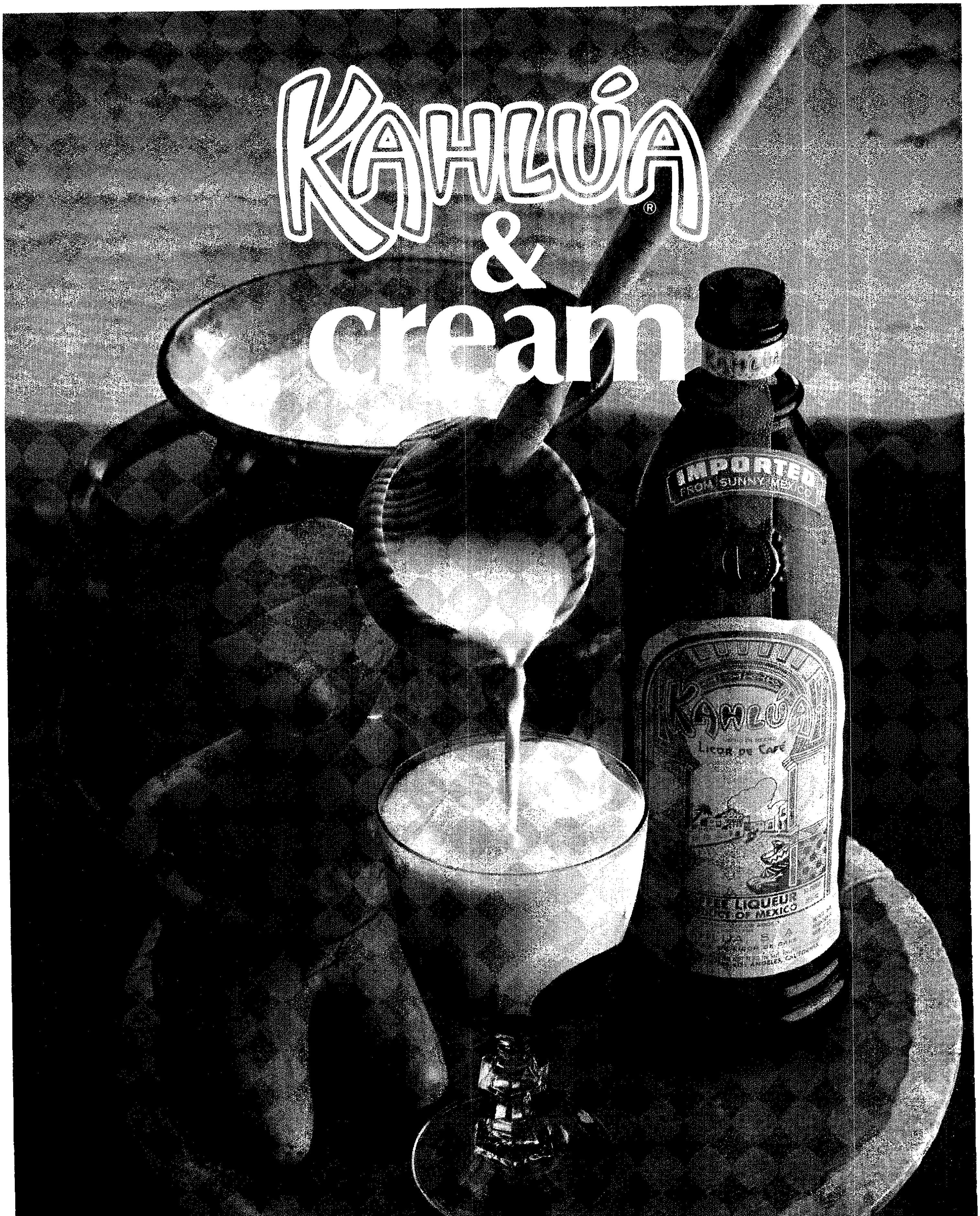
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Aug. 14: A program of films by Larry Cohen; and "Dreamchild" (†).
From Aug. 15: A program of Latin-American films.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Legal Eagles" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 14: "Friday the 13th, Part VI—Jason Lives" (directed by Tom McLoughlin). From Aug. 15: "Manhunter" (Michael Mann), with William Petersen.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 7: "Maximum Overdrive" (Stephen King), with Emilio Estevez. From Aug. 8: "One Crazy Summer" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and Demi Moore.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Aliens" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Ruthless People" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Howard the Duck" (Willard Huyck), with Lea Thompson.
Theatre 2: "Back to School" (†).
Theatre 3: "Heartburn" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Aug. 7: "The Karate Kid: Part II" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.
From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Choke Canyon" (Chuck Bail), with Stephen Collins and Bo Svenson.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Aug. 14: "About Last Night . . ." (†).
From Aug. 15: "Armed and Dangerous" (Mark L. Lester), with John Candy and Eugene Levy.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Aliens" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Love Songs" (Elie Chouraqui; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Christopher Lambert, and Nick Mancuso.

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Out of Bounds" (Richard Tuggle), with Anthony Michael Hall. From Aug. 8: "One Crazy Summer" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and Demi Moore.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 14: "Back to School" (†). From Aug. 15: "The Fly" (David Cronenberg), with Jeff Goldblum.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "The Karate Kid: Part II" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita. From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 7: "Flight of the Navigator" (Randal Kleiser). From Aug. 8: "Stand By Me" (Rob Reiner), with Wil Wheaton.

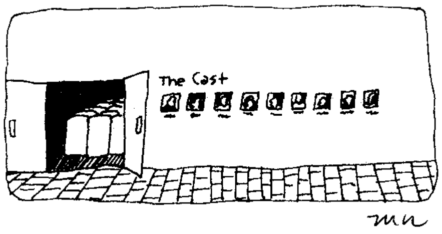
D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Aug. 14: "Top Gun" (†).
From Aug. 15: "Mona Lisa" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 14: "Mona Lisa" (†). From Aug. 15: "A Man and a Woman: 20 Years Later" (Claude Lelouch; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Jean-Louis Trintignant.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 14: "Malcolm" (Nadia Tass), with Colin Friels and John Hargreaves. From Aug. 15: "My American Cousin."

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Nothing in Common" (Garry Marshall), with Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason.
Theatre 2: "Haunted Honeymoon" (Gene Wilder), with Wilder and Gilda Radner.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Ruthless People" (†).

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Howard the Duck" (Willard Huyck), with Lea Thompson.
Theatre 2: "Legal Eagles" (†).



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 15.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"3 Men and a Cradle" (Coline Serreau; in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Heartburn" (†).

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Back to School" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Aliens" (†).
Theatre 2: "Friday the 13th, Part VI—Jason Lives" (Tom McLoughlin).

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"The Karate Kid: Part II" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Maximum Overdrive" (Stephen King), with Emilio Estevez. From Aug. 8: "One Crazy Summer" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and Demi Moore.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 14: "Out of Bounds" (Richard Tuggle), with Anthony Michael Hall. From Aug. 15: "Armed and Dangerous" (Mark L. Lester), with John Candy and Eugene Levy.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 12: "The Assam Garden" (1985; directed by Mary McMurray), with Deborah Kerr and Madhur Jaffrey. From Aug. 13: "The Liberation of Auschwitz" (Irmgard von zur Muhlen), a documentary.
Theatre 2: Aug. 6: "Loves of a Blonde" (1965; Miloš Forman; a Czech film); and "Closely Watched Trains" (1966; Jiří Menzel; in Czech). Aug. 7-9: "Rashomon" (1951; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura; and "Yojimbo" (1961; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune. Aug. 10-12: "Lola Montès" (1955; Max Ophuls; in French), with Martine Carol, Peter Ustinov, and Anton Walbrook; and "La Ronde" (†). Aug. 13-14: "Knife in the Water" (1962; Roman Polanski; in Polish); and "The Tenant" (1976; Roman Polanski), with Polanski. From Aug. 15: "Do You Remember Dolly Bell?" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Vagabond" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hail Mary" (Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "No Surrender" (Peter Smith).
Theatre 2: "Ruthless People" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Aug. 14: "Brazil" (†).
From Aug. 15: "The Fly" (David Cronenberg), with Jeff Goldblum.

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 14: "About Last Night . . ." (†). From Aug. 15: "Mona Lisa" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Great Wall" (Peter Wang; in English and Mandarin), with Wang.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Salvador" (†). From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 7: "Vamp" (Richard Wenk), with Chris Makepeace. From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.
Theatre 3: "Letter to Brezhnev" (Chris Bernard).
Theatre 4: "Ran" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Nothing in Common" (Garry Marshall), with Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason.
Theatre 2: "Flight of the Navigator" (Randal Kleiser).
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "The Great Mouse Detective," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Out of Bounds" (Richard Tuggle), with Anthony Michael Hall.

Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406)
Through Aug. 14: "The Great Mouse Detective," an animated film.
From Aug. 15: "Next Summer" (Nadine Trintignant; in French), with Fanny Ardant, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Claudia Cardinale.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Flight of the Navigator" (Randal Kleiser).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Legal Eagles" (†).

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"Hannah and Her Sisters" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Room with a View" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"About Last Night . . ." (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Heartburn" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Men . . ." (Doris Dörrie; in German).
Theatre 2: "Men . . ."
Theatre 3: "Men . . ."

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "A Great Wall" (Peter Wang), with Wang. From Aug. 8: "She's Gotta Have It" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 14: "Letter to Brezhnev" (Chris Bernard). From Aug. 15: "Mona Lisa" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sincerely Charlotte" (Caroline Huppert; in French), with Isabelle Huppert.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Nothing in Common" (Garry Marshall), with Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason.
Theatre 2: "Running Scared" (Peter Hyams), with Gregory Hines and Billy Crystal.
Theatre 3: "Back to School" (†).
Theatre 4: "Howard the Duck" (Willard Huyck), with Lea Thompson.
Theatre 5: "Aliens" (†).
Theatre 6: "Ruthless People" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Legal Eagles" (†). From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 7: "Salvador" (†). Aug. 8-14: "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" (John Hughes), with Matthew Broderick. From Aug. 15: "Manhunter" (Michael Mann), with William Petersen.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 7: "Haunted Honeymoon" (Gene Wilder), with Wilder and Gil-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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da Radner. From Aug. 8: "The Transformers—The Movie."

Theatre 4: Through Aug. 14: "About Last Night . . ." (†). From Aug. 15: "The Seventh Seal" (1956; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow, Gunnar Björnstrand, Bibi Andersson, and Nils Poppe; and "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Jarl Kulle.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 14: "Under the Cherry Moon" (directed by Prince), with Prince. From Aug. 15: "The Fly" (David Cronenberg), with Jeff Goldblum.

Theatre 2: "Back to School" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Aug. 14: "Maximum Overdrive" (Stephen King), with Emilio Estevez. From Aug. 15: "Manhunter" (Michael Mann), with William Petersen.

Theatre 4: "Legal Eagles" (†).

Theatre 5: "About Last Night . . ." (†).

Theatre 6: "Vamp" (Richard Wenk), with Chris Makepeace.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

"Ruthless People" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Top Gun" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Karate Kid: Part II" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

Theatre 4: Through Aug. 7: "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" (John Hughes), with Matthew Broderick. From Aug. 8: "A Fine Mess" (Blake Edwards), with Ted Danson.

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"Howard the Duck" (Willard Huyck), with Lea Thompson.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Running Scared" (Peter Hyams), with Gregory Hines and Billy Crystal.

Theatre 2: "Friday the 13th, Part VI—Jason Lives" (Tom McLoughlin).

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

Through Aug. 7: "The Great Mouse Detective," *an animated film.*

Aug. 8-14: "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" (John Hughes), with Matthew Broderick.

From Aug. 15: "The Great Mouse Detective."

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Out of Bounds" (Richard Tuggle), with Anthony Michael Hall. From Aug. 8: "One Crazy Summer" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and Demi Moore.

Theatre 2: "Nothing in Common" (Garry Marshall), with Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason.

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (315-8425)

Theatre 1: "Aliens" (†).

Theatre 2: "Aliens" (†).

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 7: "Haunted Honeymoon" (Gene Wilder), with Wilder and Gilda Radner. From Aug. 8: "Cocaine Wars."

Theatre 2: "Choke Canyon" (Chuck Bail), with Stephen Collins and Bo Svenson.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Aug. 7: "Prizzi's Honor" (1985; directed by John Huston), with Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner, William Hickey, and Anjelica Huston; and "Compromising Posi*tions" (1985; Frank Perry), with Susan* Sarandon, Raul Julia, and Judith Ivey.

Aug. 8-9: "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977; Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese), with Eiko Matsuda and Tatsuya Fuji; and "Empire of Passion" (1980; Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese).

Aug. 10-12: "The Magic Flute" (1975; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish); and "Fidelio" (1955; Walter Felsenstein; in German), with Claude Nollier.

Aug. 13-14: "Native Son" (1951; Pierre Chenal), with Richard Wright and Jean Wallace; and "Lost Boundaries" (1949; Alfred Werker), with Beatrice Pearson and Mel Ferrer.

Aug. 15-16: "Ladies and Gentlemen, The Rolling Stones" (1974), a concert on film; and "Christiane F." (1982; Ulrich Edel; in German), with Natja Brunkhorst.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Aug. 6: "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" (1944; Preston Sturges), with Betty Hutton and Eddie Bracken; and "A Southern Yankee" (1948; Edward Sedgwick), with Red Skelton, Arlene Dahl, and Brian Donlevy.

Aug. 7-9: "The Talk of the Town" (1942; George Stevens), with Cary Grant, Jean Arthur, and Ronald Colman; and "My Favorite Wife" (1940; Garson Kanin), with Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Gail Patrick, and Randolph Scott.

Aug. 10-11: "We're Not Married!" (1952; Edmund Goulding), with Ginger Rogers, Fred Allen, and Victor Moore; and "Auntie Mame" (1958; Morton da Costa), with Rosalind Russell, Forrest Tucker, and Coral Browne.

Aug. 12-13: "Desk Set" (†); and "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953; Jean Negules*co), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable,* and Lauren Bacall.

Aug. 14-16: "Roman Holiday" (†); and "Born Yesterday" (1950; George Cukor), with Judy Holliday, William Holden, and Broderick Crawford.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Aug. 6: "Eureka" (1985; Nicolas Roeg), with Gene Hackman, Theresa Russell, Rutger Hauer, and Mickey Rourke; and "Walkabout" (1971; Nicolas Roeg).

Aug. 7: "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1959; Marc Allégret; in French), with Danielle Darrieux; and "The Fox" (1968; Mark Rydell), with Sandy Dennis, Keir Dullea, and Anne Heywood.

Aug. 8: "The General" (1926; Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman; a silent film), with Keaton; and "The Cameraman" (1928; Edward Sedgwick; a silent film), with Buster Keaton.

Aug. 9: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972; Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man" (1981; Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi and Anouk Aimée.

Aug. 10: "Diva" (1981; *Jean-Jacques Beineix;* in French), with Wilhelmenia Fernandez and Frédéric Andrei; and "Entre Nous" (†).

Aug. 11: A program of cartoons.

Aug. 12: "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (†); and "Allonsanfan" (1974; Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni.

Aug. 13: "La Strada" (1954; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Giulietta Masina; and "I Vitelloni" (1953; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Alberto Sordi, Leopoldo Trieste, Franco Interlenghi, and Franco Fabrizi.

Aug. 14: "Ernesto" (1979; Salvatore Samperi; *in Italian*), with Martin Halm; and "The Consequence" (1977; Wolfgang Petersen; in German), with Jurgen Prochnow and Ernst Hannawald.

Aug. 15: "New York, New York" (1977; Martin Scorsese), with Liza Minnelli and Robert De Niro; and "Love Me or Leave Me" (†).

Aug. 16: "Just a Gigolo" (1979; David Hemmings), with David Bowie; and "The Man Who Fell to Earth" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Aug. 6: "The Golden Coach" (1953; Jean Renoir), with Anna Magnani; and "Picnic on the Grass" (1959; Jean Renoir; in French), with Paul Meurisse.

Aug. 7: A program of cartoons.

Aug. 8-9: "Breathless" (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Made in U.S.A." (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.

Aug. 10: "Germany Year Zero" (1949; Roberto Rossellini; in German); and "Rocco and His Brothers" (†).

Aug. 11: "Days of Heaven" (1978; Terrence Malick), with Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, and Robert Wilke; and "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940; John Ford), with Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell.

Aug. 12: "The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum" (1975; Volker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta; in German), with Angela Winkler; and "Coup de Grâce" (†).

Aug. 13: "The Fallen Idol" (†) and "Night Train" (†).

Aug. 14: A program of cartoons.

Aug. 15-16: "Inferno" (1985); and "The Shining" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Aug. 6: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972: Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "The Men" (1950; Fred Zinnemann), with Marlon Brando, Teresa Wright, Jack Webb, and Everett Sloane.

Aug. 7: "The Decameron" (1971; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini; and "The Gospel According to St. Matthew" (1966; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with a cast *of nonprofessionals.*

Aug. 8-9: "The Paradine Case" (1947; Alfred Hitchcock), with Alida Valli, Gregory Peck, Charles Laughton, and Ann Todd; and "North by Northwest" (1959; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, and Leo G. Carroll.

Aug. 10: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (†); and "Holiday" (1938; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Gary Grant, Lew Ayres, Edward Everett Horton, and Doris Nolan.

Aug. 11: "Testament of Orpheus" (†), "The Blood of a Poet" (†), and "Orpheus" (†).

Aug. 12: "The Last Hurrah" (†) and "American Madness" (†).

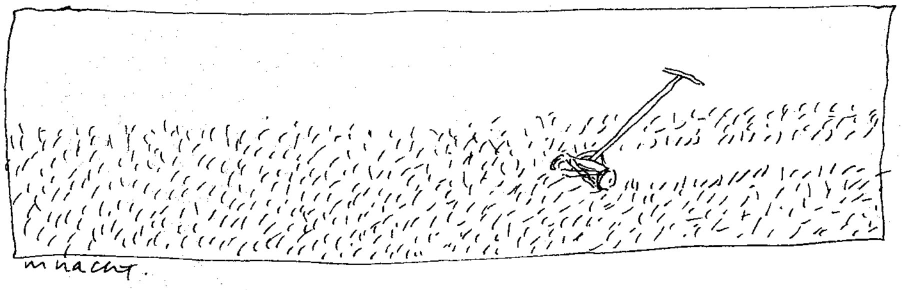
Aug. 13: "The Last Laugh" (†) and "Spies" (†).

Aug. 14: "A Letter to Three Wives" (1949; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Linda Darnell, Jeanne Crain, Ann Sothern, Kirk Douglas, and Paul Douglas; and "Five Fingers" (1952; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with James Mason, Danielle Darrieux, and Michael Rennie.

Aug. 15-16: "Walkabout" (1971; Nicolas Roeg); and "Picnic at Hanging Rock" (1975; Peter Weir), with Rachel Roberts and Dominic Guard.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those



applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: Aug. 7 at 2:30: "Drama of Jealousy" (1970; directed by Ettore Scola; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Marcello Mastroianni, Monica Vitti, and Giancarlo Giannini. . . . ¶ Aug. 7 at 6: "La Terrazza" (1979; Ettore Scola; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Marcello Mastroianni, Vittorio Gassman, Ugo Tognazzi, and Jean-Louis Trintignant. . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 2:30: "L'Armata Brancaleone" (1966; Mario Monicelli; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio Gassman, Catherine Spaak, and Gian Maria Volonté. . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 6: "Sono Stato Io" (1973; Alberto Lattuada; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Giancarlo Giannini. . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 2: "L' Armata Brancaleone." . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 5: "Brancaleone alle Crociate" (1970; Mario Monicelli; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Vittorio Gassman, Stefania Sandrelli, and Adolfo Celi. . . . ¶ Aug. 10 at 2: "Sono Stato Io." . . . ¶ Aug. 10 at 5: "Brancaleone alle Crociate." . . . ¶ From Aug. 11: Theatre closed.

THEATRE 2: Aug. 11 at 3: "Regeneration" (1915; Raoul Walsh; a silent film), with Anna Q. Nilsson. . . . ¶ Aug. 11 at 6:30: "My Darling Clementine" (1946; John Ford), with Henry Fonda, Victor Mature, and Linda Darnell. . . . ¶ Aug. 12 at 3: "Irene" (1926; Alfred E. Green; a silent film), with Colleen Moore, Lloyd Hughes, and George K. Arthur. . . . ¶ Aug. 12 at 6:30: "Around the World in Eighty Minutes with Douglas Fairbanks" (1931; Victor Fleming and Fairbanks), with Fairbanks and Fleming. . . . ¶ Aug. 14 at 3: "My Darling Clementine." . . . ¶ Aug. 14 at 6:30: "Transatlantic" (1931; William K. Howard), with Edmund Lowe, Lois Moran, and Myrna Loy. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 3: "The Balloonatic" (1923; Buster Keaton and Edward Cline; a silent film), with Keaton; and "The Navigator" (1924; Donald Crisp and Buster Keaton; a silent film), with Keaton. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 6:30 and Aug. 16 at 2:30: "High and Dizzy" (1920; Hal Roach; a silent film), with Harold Lloyd; and "Grandma's Boy" (1922; Fred Newmeyer; a silent film), with Harold Lloyd. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 5:30: A program of early D. W. Griffith films.

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (860-1863)—"The Frisco Kid" (1979; Robert Aldrich), with Gene Wilder and Harrison Ford. (Tuesday, Aug. 12, at 7.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

ABOUT LAST NIGHT . . .—This adaptation of "Sexual Perversity in Chicago," David Mamet's one-act play about singles bars and the hostility between the sexes, is close to being a conventional romance about the adjustments that lovers have to make in their first year together. Danny (Rob Lowe) is intimidated by his pal Bernie (Jim Belushi), but he learns to trust his love for Debbie (Demi Moore) and get off the singles treadmill. And Debbie casts out the doubts that are engendered by her roommate, the caustic Joan (Elizabeth Perkins). If anyone comes out of this enterprise with honor it's Perkins, who brings appealing, plaintive undercurrents to a ghastly role. Directed by Edward Zwick. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/14/86.) (Cinema 3, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Sutton, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Olympia Quad; through Aug. 14.)

ALIENS—With Sigourney Weaver, directed by James Cameron. (Reviewed in this issue.) (New Gramercy, Gotham Cinema, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and R.K.O. Century Warner Twin.)

AMERICAN MADNESS (1932)—A topical melodrama of the Depression. It's about a run on a bank—and with a twist that is purest Hollywood. The big banker (Walter Huston) is the hero, and it's his lower-echelon employees who are the villains. Frank Capra's dramatic use of the bank, where almost all the action is set, is ingenious, and the sequences of the mounting panic and the storming of the bank are effectively staged, but the resolution is populist hokum: the small depositors, grateful to Huston for his help in the past, bring in their savings to preserve his bank from ruin. With Pat O'Brien, Constance Cummings, Kay Johnson, and Gavin Gordon. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 12.)

BACK TO SCHOOL—Rodney Dangerfield, the archetypal complaining loser, who has always been a little sweaty and berserk, plays a winner here—a jovial, avuncular multimillionaire merchant, with a short fluffy coiffure; he discovers that his son (Keith Gordon) is miserable at college, and enrolls as a freshman so he can change things for the kid. It's Dangerfield's movie, and when he can't say a line directly to the camera he seems worried that he's not doing enough, and so he does some eyeball mugging. The picture's inertia is overpowering, but Dangerfield enthusiasts don't seem to mind the corn-pone script or the deadening moviemaking. It's like a beer bust to them. As the son's blue-haired punker roommate, Robert Downey has zapped big eyes and a serene, dreamy smile; he gives the movie its only airy touches. Sally Kellerman helps out as a throaty-voiced literature professor, and Paxton Whitehead and Sam Kinison provide marginal distractions. Also with Ned Beatty, Burt Young, M. Emmet Walsh, Adrienne Barbeau, Severn Darden, and, as himself, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Directed by Alan Metter; screenplay credited to Steven Kampmann, Harold Ramis, and others, from a story credited to Dangerfield and others. (7/28/86) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, U. A. East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Manhattan; through Aug. 14.)

THE BLOOD OF A POET (1930)—Jean Cocteau's first film is an enigmatic account of a poet's dreams and ecstasies and obsession with the unknown, composed in four illogical, timeless sequences that happen in the instant that a chimney topples. The first time you see this film, you're likely to find it silly, auto-erotic, static, absurd, and you may feel cheated after having heard so much about it. But though it may seem to have no depth, you're not likely to forget it—it has a suggestiveness unlike any other film. Almost twenty years later, in "Orpheus" (see below), Cocteau orchestrated the themes of the dreams and ecstasies of the poet. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 11.)

BRAZIL—Terry Gilliam, of the Monty Python troupe, presents a retro-futurist fantasy—a melancholy, joke-ridden view of the horribleness of where we are now and the worse horribleness of where we're heading. The title refers to pop escapism of the past—what you can only dream about in the squalor and sporadic terrorist violence of an Anglo-American police state "somewhere in the twentieth century." Visually, it's an original, bravura piece of moviemaking. The central character (Jonathan Pryce) is a lowly clerk, a drone; in pursuit of the girl (Kim Greist) he has glimpsed in his dreams, he runs afoul of the state apparatus. The episodes lack dramatic definition, just as the gags do; they all run together and blur. Yet Gilliam's vision is an organic thing on the screen—and that's a considerable achievement. With Robert De Niro, Katherine Helmond, Michael Palin, Ian Holm, Ian Richardson, and Kathryn Pogson. The script is by Gilliam, Tom Stoppard, and Charles McKeown. (2/10/86) (8th St. Playhouse; through Aug. 14.)

COUP DE GRÂCE (1976)—This Franco-German film version of Marguerite Yourcenar's novel is so gray and bleak and wintry that it's like a classic made in the Soviet Union twenty-five years ago. Even after it's over one isn't certain what it was about—though probably we're meant to see that the proud Countess Sophie (Margarethe von Trotta) has been deeply wounded because Erich, the Prussian officer she loves (Matthias Habich), doesn't love her. And so she throws her life away. Her self-destructive passion is only one element in a movie that has a few too many sexual, historical, and political crosscurrents. The story takes place in 1919 in the Baltic area (which had just been divided into Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) during the sporadic fighting that continued among various factions after the official end of the First World War. With Rudiger Kirschstein and Valeska Gert. The screenplay is by the director, Volker Schlöndorff, and von Trotta (his wife). In French and German. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 12.)

DESK SET (1957)—The eighth of the films that co-starred Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. He's a wizard engineer. She's in charge of a TV-network research department, and, misunderstanding his intentions, she thinks he means to put her group out of work by installing an electronic brain called Emmy. Gig Young and Joan Blondell help out, but it's a dispirited, straining-for-laughs sitcom. Tracy looks bulky, and Hepburn looks scraggy and cheerless; both seem overage for their roles. Walter Lang directed. (Regency; Aug. 12-13.)

DREAMCHILD—Coral Browne plays Lewis Carroll's Alice in 1932, just before her eightieth birthday, when she sails to New York to speak at the Lewis Carroll centenary celebration. Disoriented by the voyage and exhilarated by New York City, she experiences a second childhood; her mind wanders back to 1862, when the young Reverend Charles Dodgson (Ian Holm) had attempted to entertain her and her sisters by spinning his nonsense tale. It's only now that the elderly Alice grasps how deeply tormented he was and that he loved her. And with New York jogging her out of her confining Victorian primness, she sees how narrow her life has been. Written by Dennis Potter and directed by Gavin Millar, the picture is very enjoyable, and in some scenes it achieves levels of feeling that movies rarely get near. Nothing in Coral Browne's other screen performances suggests the frailty and beauty she brings to her Alice, and Ian Holm's performance is wonderful—funny and painful at the same time. With Amelia Shankley as Alice at ten, Jane Asher, Peter Gallagher, Nicola Cowper, and six Lewis Carroll–Tenniel creatures from Jim Henson's Creature Shop. (10/21/85) (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; through Aug. 14.)

ENTRE NOUS (1983)—The French actress turned filmmaker Diane Kurys tells the story of two young married women in the nineteen-fifties who don't recognize how unfulfilled they have been in their marriages until they meet each other. The women (Isabelle Huppert and Miou-Miou) are romanticized and politicized as soul mates; they're turned into feminist precursors, while the husbands (Guy Marchand and Jean-Pierre Bacri), who always seem to need a shave, are treated as lumps, as part of the common herd. Kurys tells us that the characters played by Huppert and Marchand are her parents, and Marchand, who plays his role superbly, is the only one a viewer is likely to have any feeling for. But Kurys has made a very peculiar kind of memory film: its psychology goes in one direction, its sexual politics take it in another. And the construction is lackadaisical and flabby. The only thing that's distinctive about it is its veneer of post-feminism. Written by the director and Alain Le Henry. In French. (Thalia; Aug. 10.)

THE FALLEN IDOL (1948)—Carol Reed and Graham Greene collaborated on this tricky, highly original thriller. It's about the muddled attempt of an eight-year-old boy (Bobby Henrey), the son of the French Ambassador to England, to protect the Embassy butler, Baines (Ralph Richardson), whom he idolizes, from a charge of murder. The plot is just about perfect, and there are two wonderful parallel episodes, when the child attempts to impart vital information, which two sets of adults ignore because they think he's just prattling nonsense. Maybe it's too deliberate, though, with its stylized lighting and its rigid pacing—you wait an extra beat between the low-key lines of dialogue. It's a polite thriller—which is close to a contradiction in terms. With Michèle Morgan and Sonia Dresdel. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 13.)

HANNAH AND HER SISTERS—A minor, agreeably skillful movie by Woody Allen. It's likable, but you wish there were more to like. The principal characters are members of a show-business family, with the stable, dependable Hannah (Mia Farrow), a successful actress who manages a career and children with

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equal serenity, as the pivotal figure, and Barbara Hershey and Dianne Wiest as her sisters. Hannah's parents are played by Maureen O'Sullivan and the late Lloyd Nolan, her financial-consultant husband by Michael Caine, and her TV writer-producer ex-husband by Allen himself. The picture would be lifeless without him; the other roles are so thin that there's nobody else to draw us into the story, and all the vital vulgarity of Woody Allen's early movies is gone. With Max von Sydow, Julie Kavner, Carrie Fisher, Daniel Stern, Sam Waterston, Tony Roberts (uncredited), and Bobby Short as himself. (2/24/86) (New Carnegie.)

Heartburn—With Meryl Streep and Jack Nicholson, directed by Mike Nichols. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount.)

The Last Hurrah (1958)—John Ford turned into a sentimental faker whenever he got near the Blarney stone, and Edwin O'Connor's novel about the final campaign and last days of Frank Skeffington, an old-style Boston mayor (Spencer Tracy), gave him an opportunity he couldn't resist. The subject is richly comic, and the picture has its moments despite the sprightly foolery, but Skeffington is so full of the milk of human kindness that he almost moos. The extraordinary cast includes James Gleason, Pat O'Brien, Basil Rathbone, Jeffrey Hunter, and Donald Crisp. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 12.)

The Last Laugh (1924)—Emil Jannings as the man whose self-esteem and position in society depend on his uniform, in F. W. Murnau's masterpiece of design and cinematography. A breathtaking achievement in silent-film technique. With added musical track. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 13.)

Legal Eagles—As a New York assistant district attorney, Robert Redford reminds you of what made him a star—but his affable performance is no more than a reminder. Debra Winger is confined in the prim, tailored-suit role of a dedicated young defense lawyer; she has glimmers of humor, but the part is an emotional straitjacket. And Daryl Hannah, who is charged with stealing one of her dead artist father's paintings, and then with murder, has no character to play—she goes through the movie pouting, her long blond hair flowing, her eyes blank. The cast includes Terence Stamp (more assured every year and looking great), David Clennon, Brian Dennehy, Roscoe Lee Browne, Christine Baranski, Sara Botsford, Steven Hill, and many other gifted performers who flit onscreen and off, with nothing to do but push the engine-less plot uphill. Directed by Ivan Reitman. (6/30/86) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews New York Twin, 57th St. Playhouse, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through Aug. 7.)

Love Me or Leave Me (1955)—Doris Day as Ruth Etting. A lot of people were deeply impressed with this melodramatic musical bio, which tries for an authentic show-business tawdriness; it's certainly better than most movie bios of popular entertainers, but that's not saying all that much. The script, by Daniel Fuchs and Isobel Lennart, is several notches above the average, and James Cagney brings frightening strength to his role as the singer's vicious lover. Some good songs, including "Mean to Me" and "Ten Cents a Dance." With Cameron Mitchell, Robert Keith, Tom Tully, Harry Bellaver, and Richard Gaines. Directed by Charles Vidor. (Thalia; Aug. 15.)

The Man Who Fell to Earth (1976)—In this movie, the forlorn, limp hero (David Bowie), a stranger on Earth, doesn't have a human sex drive. When he splashes down in a lake in the Southwest and drinks water like a vampire gulping down lifeblood, one is drawn in, fascinated by the obliqueness and by the promise of an erotic sci-fi story. It is and it isn't. The stranger has come to Earth to obtain the water that will save his people, who are dying from drought, but he is corrupted, and then is so damaged that he can't return. The wilted stranger can be said to represent everyone who feels misunderstood, everyone who feels sexually immature or "different," everyone who has lost his way, and so the film is a gigantic launching pad for anything that viewers want to drift to. Nicolas Roeg's effects become off-puttingly abstract, and his lyricism goes sentimental—as most other Christ movies do. With Buck Henry, Candy Clark, Bernie Casey, and Rip Torn. (Thalia; Aug. 16.)

Mona Lisa—Directed by the Irish novelist turned moviemaker Neil Jordan, the whole movie has some of the potency of cheap music that's represented by the title song (in Nat King Cole's 1950 recording). The short, chunky Bob Hoskins is tremendous as a onetime petty crook, just emerged from prison; given the job of chauffeuring a black call girl (Cathy Tyson) on her nightly rounds, he falls in love with her. She sets him to searching for a friend she's worried about—a blond fifteen-year-old heroin addict. As he makes his way through the strip joints and whores' hangouts, he's sickened by the way the girls are mistreated, and he sees that his old boss (Michael Caine) is in the rotten thick of it. Jordan shows a gift for making the emotional atmosphere visual, and vice versa. And the way he uses baroque touches and the clichés of old thrillers they become part of a fluid, enjoyable texture. With Robbie Coltrane, Clarke Peters, and Zoe Nathenson. Script by Jordan and David Leland. (6/16/86) (Cinema I; through Aug. 14. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Cinema Studio; starting Aug. 15.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) The cast includes Shirley Anne Field, Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Embassy 72nd St.)

The Night of the Shooting Stars (1982)—In its feeling and completeness, this film by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani may rank close to Jean Renoir's bafflingly beautiful "La Grande Illusion." The story is a woman's memories of her adventures as a six-year-old in a Tuscan village and its environs during the summer of 1944, when the American troops were rumored only days away, and the Germans who had held the area under occupation were preparing to clear out. This setting is magical, like a Shakespearean forest, and the woman's account has the quality of folklore and legend, and even its most tragic moments can be dizzyingly comic. With Omero Antonutti. The script is by the Tavianis and the producer, Giuliani G. De Negri, with the collaboration of Tonino Guerra. In Italian. (Thalia; Aug. 12.)

Night Train (1940)—Spies, the Gestapo, Berlin, and England in a British thriller of the first rank. With Margaret Lockwood, Rex Harrison, and Paul Henried; directed by Carol Reed. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 13.)

Orpheus (1949)—A masterpiece of magical filmmaking. Though it is a narrative treatment of the legend of Orpheus in a modern Parisian setting, this film, written and directed by Jean Cocteau, is as inventive and as enigmatic as a dream. Orpheus (Jean Marais), the successful poet who is envied and despised by younger poets, needs to renew himself; he tries to push beyond the limits of human experience, to reach the unknowable—the mystery beyond mortality. Dark, troubled, passionate Maria Casarès is his Death: attended by her roaring motorcyclists, the hooded messengers of death, she is mystery incarnate. Cocteau uses emblems and images of the then recent Nazi period, merging them with more primitive images of fear—as, indeed, they are merged in the modern consciousness. With Marie Déa as the sickly-sweet Eurydice, François Périer, Édouard Dermithe, and Juliette Greco. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 11.)

Ran—Set in the sixteenth century, Kurosawa's epic spectacle, a variation on the theme of "King Lear," is static, but it deepens, and it has its own ornery splendor. For the first forty minutes or so, the picture is all preparation, and it seems dead, but then the preparation begins to pay off, and by the end the fastidiousness and the monumental scale of what Kurosawa has undertaken can flood you with admiration. With Mieko Harada, Tatsuya Nakadai, the Japanese transvestite pop star known as Peter, and Hisashi Ikawa. In Japanese. (Two hours and forty-one minutes.) (1/13/86) (Quad Cinema.)

Rocco and His Brothers (1961)—Luchino Visconti's sprawling, flamboyant melodrama

LOBSTERS
R MacMillan

about how a poor Sicilian family (a mother and her five sons) is corrupted and eventually destroyed by life in Milan. Visconti's methods are still partly neorealist, but the scale of the film is huge and operatic, and it loses the intimacy of the best neorealist films, and their breath of life. The movie is memorable largely because of Annie Girardot's stunning performance as a prostitute. Renato Salvatori plays the most forceful of the brothers—it's actually his sexual passion rather than the horrors of urban existence that destroys the family. Also with Katina Paxinou, Roger Hanin, Paolo Stoppa, Suzy Delair, Alain Delon, and Claudia Cardinale. In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 10.)

Roman Holiday (1953)—Charming. This is the picture that made Audrey Hepburn a movie star. Probably no one could have brought out her skinny, long-necked gamine magic as winningly as the director William Wyler did. She plays a Central European princess on an official tour of Rome; she flies the royal coop and has her first experiences of freedom with an American reporter (Gregory Peck, who is at his most animated and likable) and his photographer sidekick (Eddie Albert). The plot is banal, and the movie is no more than a Cinderella-style romantic comedy, but it is enough. With Harcourt Williams, Hartley Power, Margaret Rawlings, and Tullio Carminati. (Regency; Aug. 14-16.)

La Ronde (1950)—Love makes the world go 'round in Max Ophuls' romantic, intricate, and rather tired version of the Schnitzler play, and the actors who move from one affair to the next include Gérard Philipe, Danielle Darrieux, Simone Signoret, Jean-Louis Barrault, Daniel Gélin, and Simone Simon. This 1950 film had censorship trouble and was cut in the heyday of its art-house fame; this version includes the cut footage. In French. (Film Forum; Aug. 10-12.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Paris.)

Ruthless People—A cheesy low farce, with Danny DeVito as a thieving millionaire who wants to kill his heiress wife (Bette Midler) and is overjoyed when she's kidnapped. With Judge Reinhold and Helen Slater (who has good eyes for rolling) as the warmhearted kidnappers; Anita Morris as the husband's mistress (she looks as if she could do considerably better); Bill Pullman as the mistress's ninny of a lover; and William G. Schilling as the police commissioner. Directed by the "Airplane!" threesome—Jim Abrahams, David Zucker, and Jerry Zucker. (7/14/86) (Bay Cinema, Beekman, Waverly, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

Salvador—The director, Oliver Stone, is probably aiming for a Buñuelian effect—a vision so intensely scummy that it clears the air. If the result, with its grime and guilt, comes closer to suggesting a hyperkinetic, gonzo version of Graham Greene, that's still nothing to be ashamed of. Written by Stone and the free-lance foreign correspondent Richard Boyle, the movie presents the civil war in El Salvador during the years 1980 and 1981 as some kind of ultimate bad trip. James Woods, perhaps the most hostile of all American actors, plays Boyle as a scroungy hustler who knows how to function in chaos: the squalid confusion wires him up, and he feels on top of things. The title doesn't refer just to the country: "Salvador" means "savior," and Woods' Boyle is the one who needs to be saved. What Stone has here is a right-wing macho fantasy joined to a left-leaning polemic. He writes and directs as if someone had put a gun to the back of his neck and yelled "Go!" and didn't take it away until he'd finished. Made on location in Mexico, except for a few scenes set in this country; the money was raised from British and Mexican sources. With Elpidia Carrillo as the peasant madonna, Jim Belushi as Doctor Rock, John Savage as the dedicated photojournalist, and Michael Murphy, Tony Plana, and Cynthia Gibb. Cinematography by Robert Richardson; music by Georges Delerue. (7/28/86) (Quad Cinema, and Olympia Quad; through Aug. 7.)

The Shining (1980)—Stanley Kubrick's gothic about the primal fear of a five-year-old boy (Danny Lloyd) that his father (Jack Nicholson) will hurt his mother (Shelley Duvall) and him. The father, who wants to write, brings his wife and child to spend the winter in an isolated, snowbound, haunted hotel in Colorado, where he is to be the caretaker—and where he goes mad and acts out his son's fears. Kubrick isn't interested in the people on the screen as individuals. They are his archetypes, and he's using them to tell us that man is a murderer through eternity. Kubrick's involvement in technology distances us from his meaning, though, and while we're watching the film it just doesn't seem to make sense. With Scatman Crothers, Joe Turkel, Barry Nelson, and Anne Jackson. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 15-16.)

Spies (1929)—Fritz Lang's stylish tale of master spies, rooms that fill up with water, and a loyal nurse who looks after a super-criminal in a wheelchair. One of Lang's best, of his best period. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 13.)

Suddenly, Last Summer (1959)—One of Tennessee Williams' feverous stories, padded out by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the director, and by Williams and Gore Vidal, who did the screenplay. They should never have allowed the audience so much time to think about what's going on: the short play turns into a ludicrous, lumbering horror movie. Katharine Hepburn is rather amusing as the Southern-belle dragon lady whose homosexual poet-son, Sebastian, was killed and partly eaten by the North African boys he'd preyed upon. Elizabeth Taylor is her distraught niece, whom she's trying to get lobotomized so that the girl won't be able to tell the story. Montgomery Clift, in possibly his worst performance, is the dim-witted neurosurgeon who can't seem to get anything into his eminent head. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 10.)

Testament of Orpheus (1962)—Cocteau's film, with himself as the Poet. Slightly awkward. The film is rich—too rich—in allusions to Cocteau's own earlier works and life, and the Cocteau legerdemain with disappearing and metamorphosed images seems aged and oddly spinsterish. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 11.)

Top Gun—The strapping Kelly McGillis is an astrophysicist employed to teach the élite fighter pilots in training at San Diego's Miramar Naval Air Station; her co-star, the relatively diminutive Tom Cruise, is supposed to be the most daring of her students. When McGillis is offscreen, the movie is a shiny homoerotic commercial; the pilots strut around the locker room, towels hanging precariously from their waists. In between the bare-chested maneuvers, there's footage of ugly snub-nosed jets taking off, whooshing around in the sky, and landing while the soundtrack calls up Armageddon and the Second Coming. What is the movie selling? It's just selling, because that's what the producers, Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, and the director, Tony Scott, know how to do. Selling is what they think moviemaking is about. With Val Kilmer, Anthony Edwards, and Tom Skerritt. (6/16/86) (Embassy. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; through Aug. 14.)

Vagabond—Agnès Varda wrote and directed this scrupulously hardheaded film about an eighteen-year-old girl on the road, a deliberately homeless drifter who lives on handouts, thefts, a little prostitution, and the occasional odd job. At the opening, her frozen body is discovered in a ditch in the countryside. Varda presents the movie as a documentary investigating how this happened. The characters are the sullen, suspicious, vacant-eyed young girl (played immaculately by Sandrine Bonnaire) and the witnesses to her last weeks. The purity and boldness of Varda's approach may call Robert Bresson to mind, but we see the closed-off girl strictly from the outside, and this factual, objective view isn't enough. With Macha Méril. In French. (5/19/86) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley. Copyright:Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

American dance is more popular than ever, and one of the reasons is The New York Public Library's Dance Collection.

Choreographer Eliot Feld says the Library at Lincoln Center is "as vital a workroom as my studio." Agnes de Mille says, "the revival of any work is dependent on access to the Library's Dance Collection."

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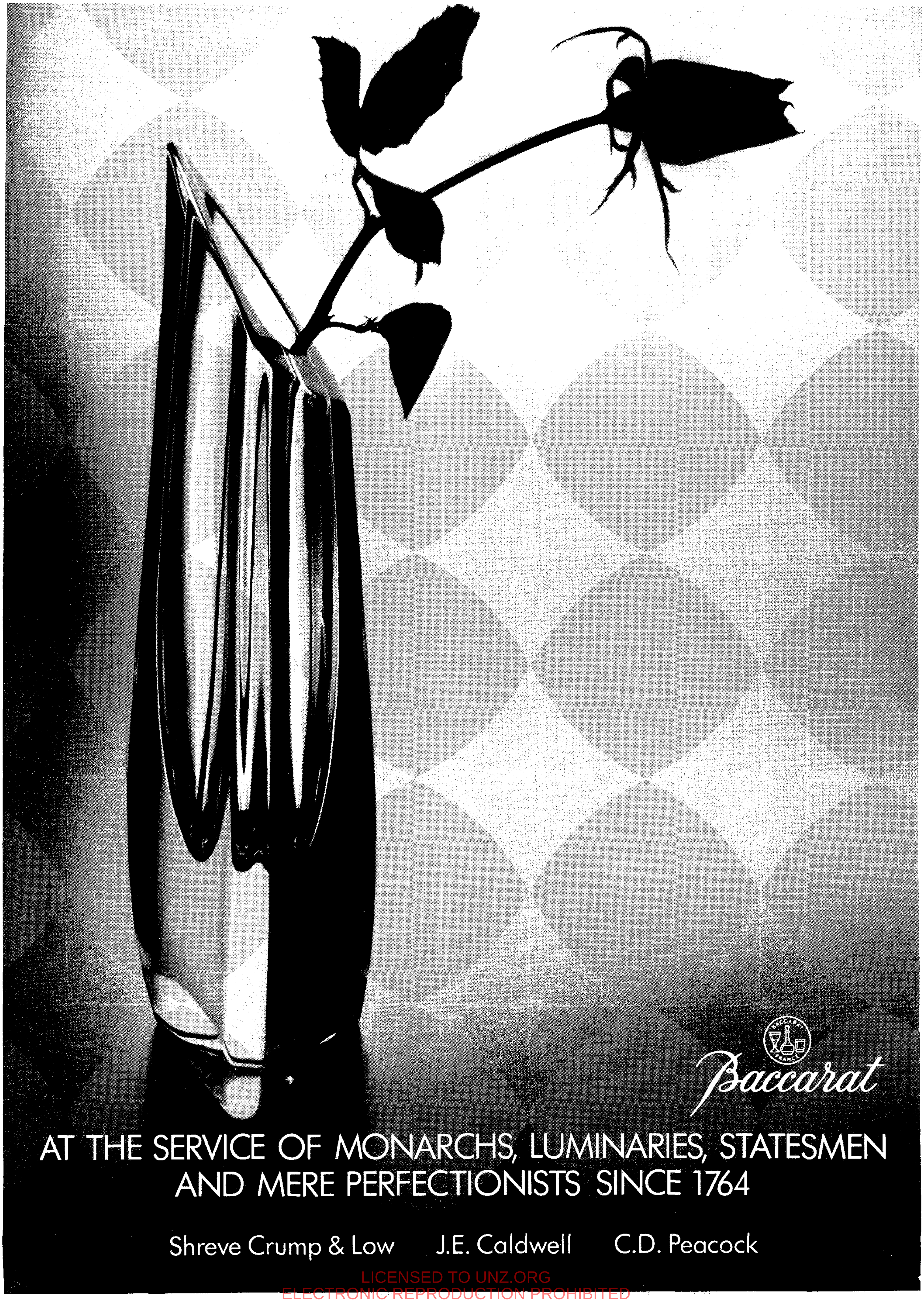
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Baccarat
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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

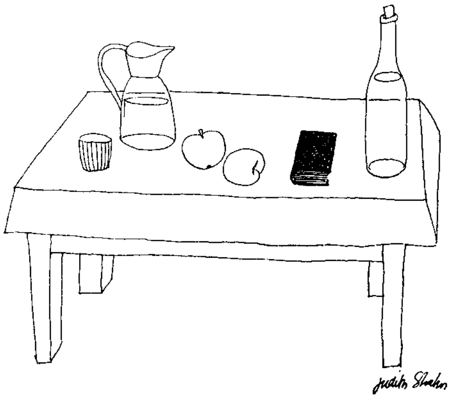
A FRIEND writes:

My lover said to me, Sing me a song of Military Technology. So I said to my lover, Of course, dear lover, and sang her the song, drawing my inspiration from the pages of *Military Technology*, a hefty and lavishly illustrated journal issued thirteen times a year by the Mönch Publishing Group, in Bonn, in which the richnesses of the international weapons industries spill forth as from a cornucopia with no apparent terminus. I sang in the Plethoric Mode, accompanying myself on a small KDAR (Klein-Drohne Anti-Radar device, now undergoing testing by Dornier GmbH, of Friedrichshafen, West Germany).

I sang to her of Royal Ordnance, once wholly a U.K. government operation, now a public limited company. R.O. produces or manages the production of an amazing range of things, from bayonets to tanks, scattering poetic touches along the way. I needed only to invoke warheads and fuse assemblies for the SEA CAT, SEA WOLF, SEA SKUA, and SEA EAGLE systems, or the redoubtable SWINGFIRE, RAPIER, BLOWPIPE, and JAVELIN. The names of these systems are always printed in caps and suggest, always, either animal vitality (SEA CAT) or ironic homage to the technology of an earlier day (BLOWPIPE). The GIANT VIPER, from Royal Ordnance, is an explosive hose two hundred and thirty metres long packed in a wooden box. A multiple rocket drags the hose across a minefield, and the hose, detonating itself, clears a zone claimed to be seven and two-tenths metres wide by as much as two hundred and thirty metres long. Come with me, Priscilla, and we will watch GIANT VIPER as it slithers toward its metallic apotheosis.

But there is more, much more. Come with me, Priscilla, and gaze upon the Ultimax 100 Light Machine Gun, drum-fed, from Chartered Industries, of Singapore. It's the world's lightest, the Chartered folks say. Regard its drum, a handsome dove-gray affair containing a hundred golden rounds of 5.56 ammo. Pakistan Ordnance offers Pyrotechnics, Flare Trips, Cartridge Signal Shooting Pencils, Fuses, Primers, Detonators, and High Explosives (all types). Its telex address is 5840 POFAC PK. Chile has on sale the new Cardoen cluster bombs, at a hundred and thirty and five hundred pounds. These open in midair to release sophisticated bomblets—the first releasing fifty sophisticated bomblets, the second releasing two hundred and forty sophisticated bomblets. Cardoen's phone number in Santiago: 231-3420.

Norway will sell us its OCTOLS, HEXOTOLS, HEXALS, and all types of plastic explosives and plastic-bonded explosives: Dyno Industries there, its touching telex 19105 Nobel N. And Brazil has a new main battle tank for the world market, the Osório EE-T1, designed to be equipped with either the 120-mm. smooth-bore gun or the 105-mm. rifled gun! A good-looking devil, too, low and lean and plated with the famous Engesa bimetallic armor. Let it beware of the new AAW (Anti-Armor Weapons) from the hardworking engineers of FFV Ordnance, of Eskilstuna, Sweden: the well-known Carl-Gustaf 84-mm. RCL, the AT 4, the 028 anti-tank mine, and 7.62 AP ammunition. Soon they will have STRIX, a newly developed target-seeking, rocket-assisted mortar projectile, and ELMA, a weapon designed to force submarines to the surface without destroying them. A bit mysterious, ELMA—how do they do it?—but mystery is part of the song of Military Technology.



The Swiss offer Sig Sauer pistols, the P 226, P 225, P 220, and P 230, the last of these termed particularly suitable for concealed carrying. Checked handgrips and (nice touch) a striated trigger, for slippy trigger fingers. Sumptuous mines, land mines, and scattering systems are available from Misar, of Brescia, Italy. Greece has the ARTEMIS (virgin huntress associated with the moon) 30 anti-aircraft system; performs well, no doubt, against moon-drunk pilots, if there be any such still. Israel Aircraft Industries, Ltd., will furnish us with PADS, LANS, GONS, SLOS, and TWMP, which are, respectively, a Precision Azimuth Determination System, a Land Area Navigation System, a Gun Orientation Navigation System, a Stabilized Long-Range Observation System, and a mine-clearing attachment for engineering vehicles. Give I.A.I. a call at Ben-Gurion International Airport, (03) 9713111. Australia stands ready to provide the Carrington Minehunter, a shallow-draft catamaran equipped with the Krupp Atlas MWS80 Weapons System linked to the remote-controlled PAP-104 mine-disposal vehicle. West Germany has the MILAN and HOT anti-tank systems (developed in coöperation with Aérospatiale France, marketed by EUROMISSILE) and ROLAND, a surface-to-air anti-aircraft system, all brought to us by MBB, Messerschmitt-Bölkow-

Blom, of Munich—the grand old names keep coming back.

Problems with C^3I (command, control, communications, and intelligence)? Ferranti, of Ty Coch Way, Cwmbran, Gwent, Wales, NP44 7XX, can accommodate you. Air-defense systems, airborne data links, battlefield control and management systems—whatever your domain of defense, it has the answers to your C^3I needs. What has Belgium done for us lately? Fabrique Nationale Herstal has a new Quick Change Barrel for the Browning .50-calibre machine gun and an explosive incendiary round, the APEI FN 169, to match. Where is France? Right behind us, with the GERFAUT pulse Doppler radar, from Meudon-la-Forêt. They are all ours, Priscilla, these or their domestic equivalents, given our three-hundred-billion-dollar defense budget and a world defense expenditure of more than nine hundred and thirty billion dollars last year. That we don't want them doesn't matter very much.

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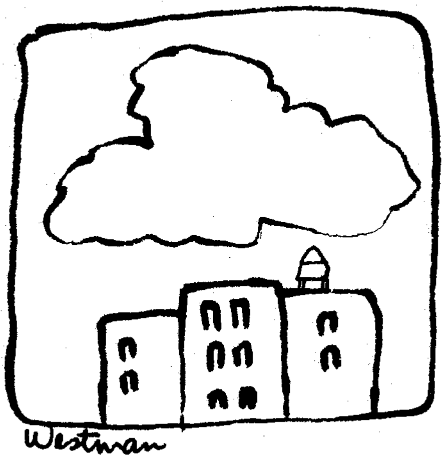
Strong Redux

WE like to touch base every so often with Maurice F. Strong, the peripatetic Canadian industrialist-cum-environmentalist who until recently was the executive coördinator of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. He has just taken a new United Nations job, as a special adviser to the Secretary-General, but our chance came shortly before that happened, when we espied Strong—who is fifty-seven and seems as brisk and energetic as ever he was—emerging at a near-sprint from the United Nations Cleaners, near First Avenue and Forty-eighth. He had a couple of dry-cleaned suits slung over one shoulder. Trying to keep abreast, we besought a chat, and he bade us accompany him to the O.E.O.A. offices, at 866 United Nations Plaza. "One of the hardest parts of my job has been to stay in any one place long enough to get laundry done," Strong told us in the elevator. He said he was about to take off for a series of conferences on the aftermath of the African famine crisis—and at conferences, we were aware, he could wear any number of hats, among them that of the chairman of the Third World developmental group called the North-South Roundtable and that of a Fellow of London's Royal Society of Arts. Strong said that he hoped to get to Vancouver, where he maintains a seaside home, so he could take in its Expo '86, but that these days he ordinarily tends to favor the state of Colorado, where he has a ranch in the San Luis Valley. Strong lives there a good part of the year, with his second wife, a Danish designer named Hanne Marstrand. He met her in Stockholm while he was presiding over the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.

Strong said he estimated he had spent at least forty per cent of his time in Africa—mostly in Ethiopia and Sudan—since December, 1984, when it seemed probable that neither that continent's nations nor the United Nations' existing agencies could cope with the hunger there. James P. Grant, the executive director of UNICEF, urged Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar to set up a new office. The Secretary-General did so, and asked Strong, who had recently left the Canadian government (in which he'd been chairman of the Canada Development Investment Corporation) and was planning to return to private enterprise, to head it.

"There were some two hundred million Africans affected, in twenty countries, and thirty-five million of them were by most accounts acutely affected, which meant they were near the point of death," Strong told us. "My job was to mobilize the acquisition of food and medical supplies and see that they got to the appropriate seaports and were then distributed to literally thousands of destinations. Most of the deaths and extreme suffering that we all got to know about came right at the start, when a lot of people were beyond saving and the mobilization of major resources hadn't really got under way. A remarkable thing is that, despite everything, at the end of 1985 most of those thirty-five million were still alive—though some suffered permanent damage and even now are weak and vulnerable. The 1985 rains, when they finally came, were the best in seventeen years. But, while for the time being the drought there may be over in most areas, the famine isn't. Ironically, the rains were a problem as well as a promise, because they made it harder to distribute food while the crops in the ground were germinating. We just hoped people would survive till harvesttime. It wasn't until shortly before Christmas that we said to ourselves that the harvest was going to be good and our clients were going to be alive to enjoy it. Even so, it's dangerous for anybody to think there's no more emergency. We know that droughts are inevitable over there, and so are famines. Still, that most of these thirty-five million are living seems to me in a sense like the averting of a major war, and that entitles me, I hope, to a little self-satisfaction. But I wouldn't want anybody to think that everything is all right. There are perhaps eighteen million Africans remaining in need of some kind of emergency relief, and I construe it to be one of my principal responsibilities to try to maintain the momentum of public interest in their long-term plight."



Dead Sea Stroll

LETTER from another friend, this one travelling in Israel:

From boyhood, I had wanted to swim in the Dead Sea. Now I have done it, and I will tell you what it was like.

To swim in the Dead Sea, you must first get to the Dead Sea. If you head east from Jerusalem in a tour bus, as I did, you pass through a succession of landscapes that are as strange and as familiar as a dream. There is Jerusalem itself, small, opaque, and exultant, built all of pale, rosy stone. Then there are outskirts of the city, modest but not grindingly poor, with Arab villages among boulder-littered hills. Then, abruptly, no more than fifteen minutes' drive from the center of the city, you are in the desert.

This desert, this wilderness, is not the smoothly rippled sand ocean of Arabia. It's a landscape of hardy little rounded hills, tufted with scrubby vegetation. The tiny valleys between the hills are so narrow you could almost leap across them. The land is mostly empty—empty and lunar—but its emptiness is not complete. Here is a shepherd, almost too Biblical to believe, and a little knot of sheep, scurrying up

"How about a Shirley Temple on the house and then you skedaddle?"

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the side of a hill like bugs up a wall. There is a Bedouin camp: low, dark tents pitched in the notch of a gully; a tall Bedouin, robed in red and black, walking with long, liquid strides; nearby, a camel. A few miles on, in the distance to the north, is a glimpse of a brand-new hilltop town, bleached white, modern, yet clinging to the crags like a medieval fortress. What is this chalky Carcassonne? It is, of course, one of the Israeli "settlements." We are on the occupied West Bank, after all.

Less than an hour after you set out, the road descends, and the Dead Sea comes into view. The Dead Sea is thirteen hundred feet below sea level, and the air is very hot. The road curves down and around to the south and hugs the shoreline between the water and the forbidding Judean Hills. Ahead, the water stretches to the horizon; to your left you can see the Jordan side and the mountains of Moab.

An hour's drive along the arid, mostly barren shore takes you past the caves of Qumran, where the Dead Sea scrolls were found; past a couple of spring-fed oases, where date palms grow; past a featureless military outpost—formerly Jordanian, now Israeli. Mostly, though, it takes you past nothing but the flat, still water and the craggy, angry-looking mountains. There are no water birds, because there is nothing for them to feed upon. There are only huge black crows. They circle ominously.

Finally, our destination appears—a place called Ein Gedi. According to the guidebook, this was a great town in Biblical times, headquarters of the perfume industry. No scent of any of that now. Just one wretchedly modernistic structure, to which we repair. This building, which is operated by a local kibbutz, looks exactly like a rest stop on the New Jersey Turnpike. At least, it's air-conditioned.

Inside, each of us pays a trifling sum, passes through a turnstile, and is given a towel and a key to a locker. We have come here, instead of simply pulling off the road somewhere and jumping in, because this place has showers, and none of us wish to spend the rest of the day glazed in salt, like a margarita glass. There is a sulfur spring on the premises and some utilitarian-looking sunken tubs in which to soak. Fifteen minutes up to my chin in the stuff leaves me feeling no healthier than before, although perhaps my life has been lengthened. I'll just have to wait and see.

Outside, where the hot air hits like the blast from a furnace, a path made of packed sand leads down to the Dead Sea itself. I am barefoot—a mistake. The sand is so hot that after five or six steps the soles of the feet begin to cook. Fortunately, I have brought my towel. Every few steps, I drape it in front of me like a matador's cape and stand on it for a few moments. In this way, I navigate the hundred yards or so to the edge of the water, where a rickety gangplank leads down and in.

Patience rewarded! I'm in the water of the Dead Sea at last—up to my ankles, then up to my knees, then, plodding resolutely toward Jordan, up to my waist. The water is shockingly warm, scarcely cooler than the desert air. It has a slightly gritty, "full" feel to it, as if it were about to precipitate into a soup of sharp crystals. It's green and cloudy, like a semiprecious stone. Holding my hand three inches beneath the surface, I can still see my hand; at eight inches, no more.

"Ouch!" Up ahead, in deeper water, one of my travelling companions is wincing and squinting. He has ducked his head under the surface, and now the salt is stinging the rims of his eyelids. I decide to keep my face dry. Then it turns out that I have a little scratch on my forearm. I didn't know it was there, but now, as soon as the water touches it, every millimetre of it burns intensely, and around the edges it instantly swells up.

Never mind. I decide to swim out where there are no people. I lean back, letting my feet float up in front of me—and the stories are true. Suddenly, I am a human raft. As I lie on my back, the whole of the front of my body is out of the water. I can raise my head up and look around. I try to kick, but succeed only in slapping the surface ineffectually with my heels. Nor does backstroking seem to work, or frog-kicking. Finally, experimentation yields a method. I stick my arms straight out to the side, stiffly, and use them as oars. In this manner, I make slow, stately progress, like a Roman galley. After a while, I roll over, thinking that perhaps I can swim faster on my stomach. But no. It's absurd, but I can't get my hands and my feet to stay under at the same time, especially with my neck bent back to keep my face out. I put my feet under water, and out pop my hands. In go my hands, and out come my feet.

One way and another, I have managed to get out into water that is over my head. I bring my feet under me, so I'm standing straight up, and sink as far as I can. I become a cork. My head and shoulders stick out: the water begins at about three inches below my collarbone. I must make constant little kicks and strokes to stay vertical, or the water will float my feet to the surface. I am treading water, but sidewise, not up and down.

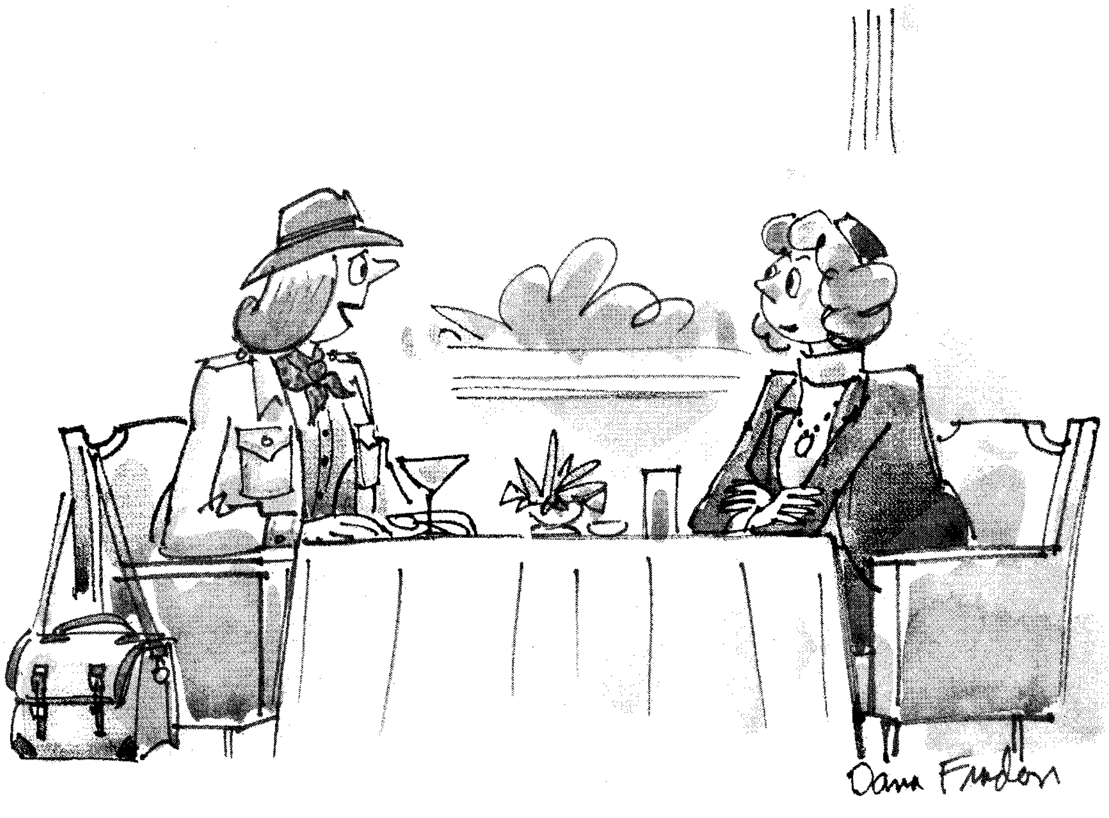
One can do very little while bathing in the Dead Sea other than observe such curious effects as these. There is no question of frolicking or splashing. Water polo is right out. To splash someone with this liquid would be an act of aggression, not of playfulness. After perhaps twenty minutes of floating, turning this way and that, and slowly pickling, I begin to feel satiated with the delights of the Dead Sea. Wading toward shore through the almost motionless water, I bring the back of my hand to my tongue. The taste is nothing like salt; it is a taste of pure, powerful, metallic bitterness.

As I come out of the water, my skin feels a tiny bit sore, as if I had been ever so gently flayed. It will be pleasant to take a shower in fresh—or, at least, unsalty—water. Swimming in the Dead Sea has been a wholly satisfactory experience. It has been every bit as strange as I had hoped it would be. I am very glad to have done it. And now that I have done it I am very glad that I will never feel the need to do it again.

Perforated

CONSIDER Palau, also spelled Belau or Pelew. Encompassing more than two hundred islands spread across the western end of the Carolines, Palau, a quasi-independent republic, has an average temperature of eighty-two degrees; fertile mangrove swamps and forests of pandanus palms; taro, cassava, and sweet potatoes; and a radio station and a TV station. Yes, yes, there are crocodiles on some of the islands, but there are also dugongs, known to some as sea cows. And a bicameral legislature! Still, paradise wants for this and that, including postage stamps. A dugong is great, but he won't send in your rent check. That is where Jim Ruttencutter intersects with the archipelago. From a seventh-floor Union Square studio, Mr. Ruttencutter draws stamps for Palau, and the Marshall Islands, and a number of other places.

Mr. Ruttencutter showed us his last set of Palau commemoratives, released about a year and a half ago. They depicted a *borotong* (cargo canoe), an *olechutel* (bamboo raft), a *kaeb* (racing and sailing canoe), and a *kabekl* (war canoe). Following the start of German colonial rule, at the end of the nineteenth century, Palauans were encouraged merely to race their war canoes; gradually, the art of building all four craft (which included sanding the hulls with the skin of a ray) died out, and no specimens remain. So Mr. Ruttencutter had to work from written descriptions and old sketches. "At first, we were going to do some whaling ships, but then it turned out that no one had ever sighted a

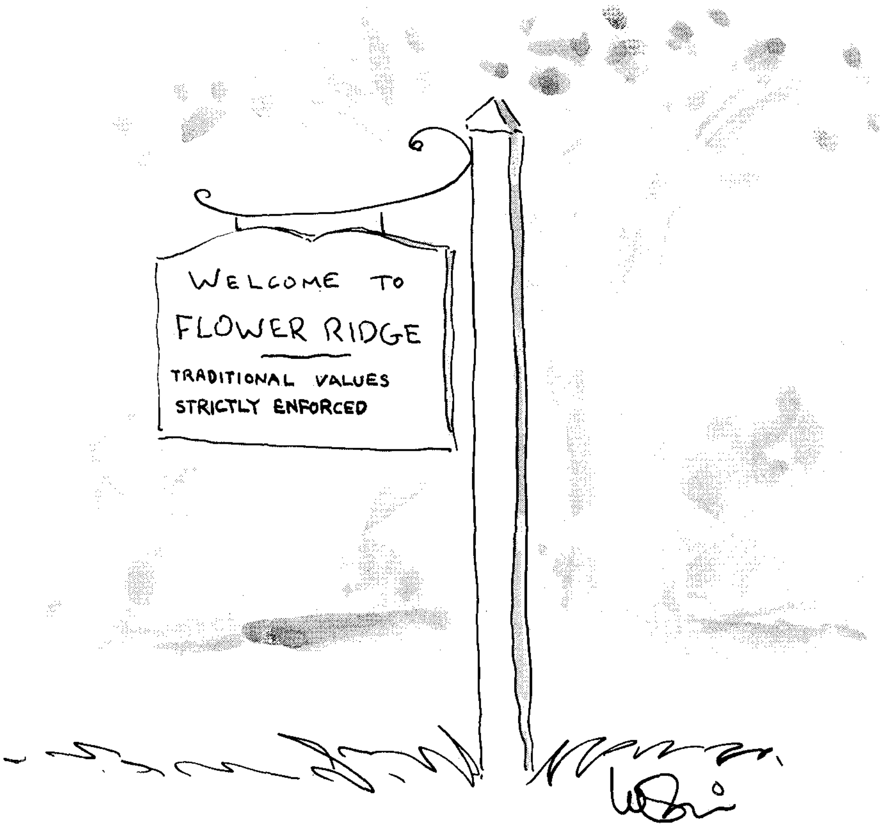


"I met my first husband at Bloomingdale's and my second husband at Banana Republic."

whale there—or, if anyone had, it was only a mixed-up one, like Humphrey," he said. Difficulty is the rule in his business. For one thing, he sometimes has to draw on tiny little boards, only four times the size of stamps, often mixing his watercolors with pastels so that the colors will have sufficient intensity. And the customer is always right. At the moment, he is reworking a set of four stamps for the Marshall Islands marking the fortieth anniversary of the start of atomic testing at Bikini atoll. The first three stamps—evacuation, blast, and return—went over well with the Marshallese authorities. The fourth stamp showed a woman planting a coconut on the resettled island. "The old pictures, from when they were leaving the island, show the women doing much of the work," Mr. Ruttencutter told us. "But the government had me redraw the stamp to show a man."

Mr. Ruttencutter, who is retired from a long and successful career as art director for various advertising agencies, works on the stamps for the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation, a Forty-eighth Street concern that broke into the stamp market in the late nineteen-fifties with the decolonization of Ghana. Now, Pauline Cianciolo, the company's public-relations specialist, told us when we called, it represents forty nations, many of which are too small to do their own stamp production. A country such as Palau will actually take delivery on perhaps ten per cent of its stamps, she explained, and the rest are sold directly to dealers and collectors, as a source of hard currency. "Wildlife always sells pretty well, and railroads—but, of course, there are no railroads in Palau, so we avoid that," she said. "Famous Palauans might not sell as briskly, but the authorities are planning a commemorative honoring the former President, a very bright young man, who was assassinated last summer." The smallest client ever handled by the firm was probably Redonda, which Ms. Cianciolo described as "a rock, more or less." An uninhabited island of Antigua and Barbuda, Redonda was slated for development, and so a stamp was issued. But the scheme has yet to take hold, not through any fault of the very pretty stamp.

Stamp collecting, said Ms. Cianciolo, has been losing out among young people to music videos and other such attractions, and some fear trouble ahead for philately. "It's like the theatre, actually," she told us. "It's always supposed to be dying, but it never dies. And I don't think it will. Stamps are so wonderful. They are miniature works of art. They are paper ambassadors."



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Bulletin from Connecticut

WHAT with rabid raccoons working their way north from MD and PA at a pace of twenty-five miles per year, according to the newspapers, habitués of CT, the Nutmeg State, distraught at the prospect of a dip in the price of cottages below the half-million-dollar mark, have taken to absent-mindedly leaving their back doors ajar when they go out for an evening stroll, and resident raccoons have seized the opportunity to keep themselves in peak condition by grazing in deserted kitchens, with results of which the following is but one example:

Three fugitive cats.

Three portions of cat food, moist and dry, consumed, plus one saucer of two-per-cent-fat milk.

One garbage pail overturned, with melon rinds, cigarette butts and ashes, nectarine pits, and coffee grounds scattered in the direction of the pantry closet.

Coffee grounds in the cats' bowl of water, and paw prints leading therefrom up the wall and onto a pantry shelf strewn with crumbled saltines and mini-pretzel twists, unopened jars of peanut butter, molasses, and hot taco sauce, an empty Cheerios box, and most of a shredded package of Fruitful Bran.

Prints leading down the wall, around the icebox, and into the bathroom.

Remnants of the Fruitful Bran package lying on the bathroom floor, also paw prints and mud on the floor, with traces of Fruitful Bran, evidently washed, sticking to the floor.

Damp crumbs marking the demise of three bagels on the top of the icebox, within easy reach of the tip of the ironing board.

Tooth prints on a tiny varnished loaf of bread that serves as an icebox magnet.

Unmistakable evidence of further activity in the form of a layer of sunflower-seed hulls and shattered glass leading from the kitchen—where there was once an unopened bag of sunflower seeds on the counter and a burned-out forty-eight-inch fluorescent bulb propped in a corner to remind someone to replace it—through the dining room into the living room and back into the kitchen.

A trail from this point of mingled glass, Fruitful Bran, and coffee grounds showing the way out.

AN ANATOMY OF MIGRAINE

(In Memory of Annette Leo)

I

Inquire what consciousness is made of
with Galen, with Leonardo, Leeuwenhoek,
or Dr. Tulp, and you find two hemispheres,
a walnut in a bath of humors,

a skullcapped wreath of arteries, a weft
of fibrous thoroughfares along the walls
of Plato's cave, the cave walls of Lascaux:
those shambling herds, this hollow

populous with fissures, declivities,
arboreal thicketings, with pairings
and degrees, this fist-sized flutter,
mirror-lake of matter,

seat of dolor and jubilee, the Law of Moses
and the giggling underneath the bedclothes,
of Bedlam and the Coronation Anthem—all
these shut up in a nutshell.

Go back, step past the nadir of whatever
happened to divide our reckoning, a fraction
of an anti-millennium, a millennium and more
ago, and hear Hippocrates declare

the brain is double. Since then, as to
where, in these paired hemispheres, the self—
with its precarious sense of *I am I*,
with its extremes of possibility—

resides, we've come no nearer than
Descartes, who thought he'd found it in
the pineal teardrop. (Now no one's sure
what that gland is for.)

Inquire what consciousness is made of
of Simone Weil and she answers: Pain.
The drag of gravity. The sledge of time.
A wretchedness no system

can redeem, extreme affliction that
destroys the *I;* nothing is worse, she
wrote. And knew whereof she wrote, who'd
drudged, with an ineptitude

only the saints would find becoming,
in a Renault assembly line; had seen
the waste, how small the profit, how
many suffer and learn nothing, how,

as Kate Croy observed (and chose accordingly),
deprivation made people selfish, left them
robbed of the last rags of character,
preyed and put upon, enmired in rancor.

She'd seen, was not immune, had been there;
had her own cliffs of fall within the skull:
headache, driven by whose cringing thud
she'd scrupulously noted
a craven urge within herself to cause
someone, anyone, to suffer likewise.
Is the mind divided, as Hippocrates
declared the brain is?

Did she invite in what all but unhinged her?
She'd known well-being, however threaded
with crevasses; been witness to the white
stars' stillness overhead, the white

drift of petals from the apple trees: such
tranquil spanglings of the retina of time,
she could not doubt the universe
is full, that splendors

of entity, of grace past meeting face
to face, project, each one, its fearful
opposite, its double—as each electron
in the universe its Manichaean

anti-particle: in every molecule of
every nerve cell, such forces within
forces within forces, the marvel
is that anyone is ever well,

that consciousness is ever other than
a frazzled buzz, one long sick headache.
My father never gave the name of migraine
to that locked-in retribution

of the self against—against who knows
what or whom? Fenced brutes, barbed wire
and rawhide, fear of a father's anger,
mere heredity? His father,

to a grandchild seemingly so mild, so
equable, had labored, I would one day
learn, through that same territory:
days of headache, nights so worry-

racked he thought his mind would go.
Heredity: finally, in a little memoir
impelled by painful rectitude, he'd
set down how dread

of what had made him made *his* father
by temper hard: got out of wedlock,
the old conundrum—*Who am I? where did
I come from?*—twice riddled,

learning whose bastard he was, he'd
manfully assumed that surname. Stirred
or unstirred, the generations' cesspool
fills; the circle of the wrathful,

ventilated, usurps the crawl space:
all Hell's hand-me-downs hung from
the spindle of Necessity, each sprung-
from-two, spun-out-of-nothing

being crying from within, *I, I,*
while time that bears the thinking

being toward what it cannot bear
   impales it here.

2

Here is impaled—hinge, mirror-image,
cleft, and crossing-place—the hard
world-knot of entity, the One not one
   at all but contradiction,

Nohow and Contrariwise, chiasmus through
the looking-glass: fraternal inter-
twinings, at the very core a battle;
   so the neurobiological

dilemma of the paired, the hemispheric,
re-ramifies—bright, dark; left, right;
right, wrong—and so euphoria gives way to
   spleen, its obverse, as though

the cosmos repented of itself, of all those
promises, all those placebos: the sun-flooded
square, stone blossoming, each canvas seen as
   a live aperture, a space

to step into; then the usual consequence,
of waking to another migraine: three days
in a darkened room, the drastic easement
   of ergot, derivative of poisoned

rye long known to midwives, proscribed for
her too fragile bloodways. Lift the hem
of medicine and you discover torture
   and placebo twinned, still there.

No cure. This happened, was set down.
I read the manuscript amazed. We hadn't met.
Letters had been exchanged, her driven,
   bannered penmanship an

army out of "Alexander Nevsky"—the whips,
the wolves, the keening steppes, the Russian
mother-lap her history had been torn from.
   One day a parcel came,

impeccably hand-wrapped, inside it an
uncrafted something—three sea-winnowed
sandstones, a wave-buffed driftwood elbow—
   from the beach at Malibu.

I blushed, both flattered and adroitly
remonstrated with: the manuscript (so many
women writing books, their scripts unread,
   still hoping for some recognition!) I'd

said I'd look at not yet opened. I opened
it that day—though not before an ounce
of Maine-coast beach glass had been
   wrapped and sent, transcon-

tinental reciprocity—and read it through.
The migraine on the day she was to fly
to Italy, a frame and a foreshadow
   of that volatile chiaroscuro,

a life repeatedly, strenuously, just barely
put back in order—that migraine (*You too!*)
set her instantly, for me, with an élite
   vised by the same splenic coronet:

Dorothy Wordsworth, George Eliot, Margaret
Fuller, Marx, Freud, Tolstoy, Chopin, Lewis
Carroll, Simone Weil, Virginia Woolf:
   a gathering of shades, of

forebears and best friends who'd all gone
to that hard school. Since Homer peered
at Tartarus, we've looked into a gazetteer-
   authenticated Hell, a place for

meeting with—for hearing yet again the
voices of—the dead. The cosmos, looped with
bigfoot odysseys set down in moon dust, now
   gives it no place but in the hollow

of the skull: that Amazon where no explorer
goes except on hands and knees, the strait
last entrance to the fields of asphodel
   where, say, Simone Weil

and Virginia Woolf might meet and find no distance,
after all, in what they'd finally perceived—
what the latter wrote of as " 'reality' . . . beside
   which nothing matters;" she who'd,

at moments, bridged the mind's crevasse: "Lying
in bed, mad, & seeing the sunlight quivering, like
gold water, on the wall, I've heard the voices of the
   dead here, and felt, through it all, exquisitely

happy." Anny, friend by mail, what I would give
for time to talk of this! We met just once; at ease
at once, walked barefoot on the sands at Malibu,
   the blue air that afternoon, by

some semantic miracle, angelic; picked up stones,
observed the dolphins. A last letter in that script
her unemphatic beauty stanched without a trace.
   Then, in a hand I did not recognize—

cramped, small, precise—one from the husband
who'd survived her: dead in her sleep. No
warning. But she'd known, had written of, in
   one half-retracted note, a premonition.

I miss her. Though our two lives just touched,
the torn fabric of some not-yet-imagined
prospect hangs there, streamered, splendid,
   vague: well-being rainbowed

over a lagoon of dark: all that I'm even
halfway sure of marked by that interior cleft
(black, white; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim), I
   live with shades of possibility,

with strangers, friends I never spoke to, with
the voices of the dead, the sunlight like gold
water on the wall—electron-charged, precarious—
   so tenuously made of consciousness.

—Amy Clampitt

THE ENIGMA OF ARRIVAL

ONE winter, I moved to a cottage in the grounds of a manor house in a valley in Wiltshire. The cottage at that time still had the books and some of the furniture of the people who had been there before. Among the books was one that was very small, a paperback booklet smaller in format than the average small paperback and with only a few pages. The booklet, from a series called the Little Library of Art, was about the early paintings of Giorgio de Chirico. There were about a dozen reproductions of his early Surrealist paintings. Technically, in these very small reproductions, the paintings did not seem interesting; they seemed flat, facile. And their content was not profound, either: arbitrary assemblages, in semi-classical, semi-modern settings, of unrelated motifs—aqueducts, trains, arcades, gloves, fruit, statues—with an occasional applied touch of easy mystery; in one painting, for instance, an overlarge shadow of a hidden figure approaching from round a corner.

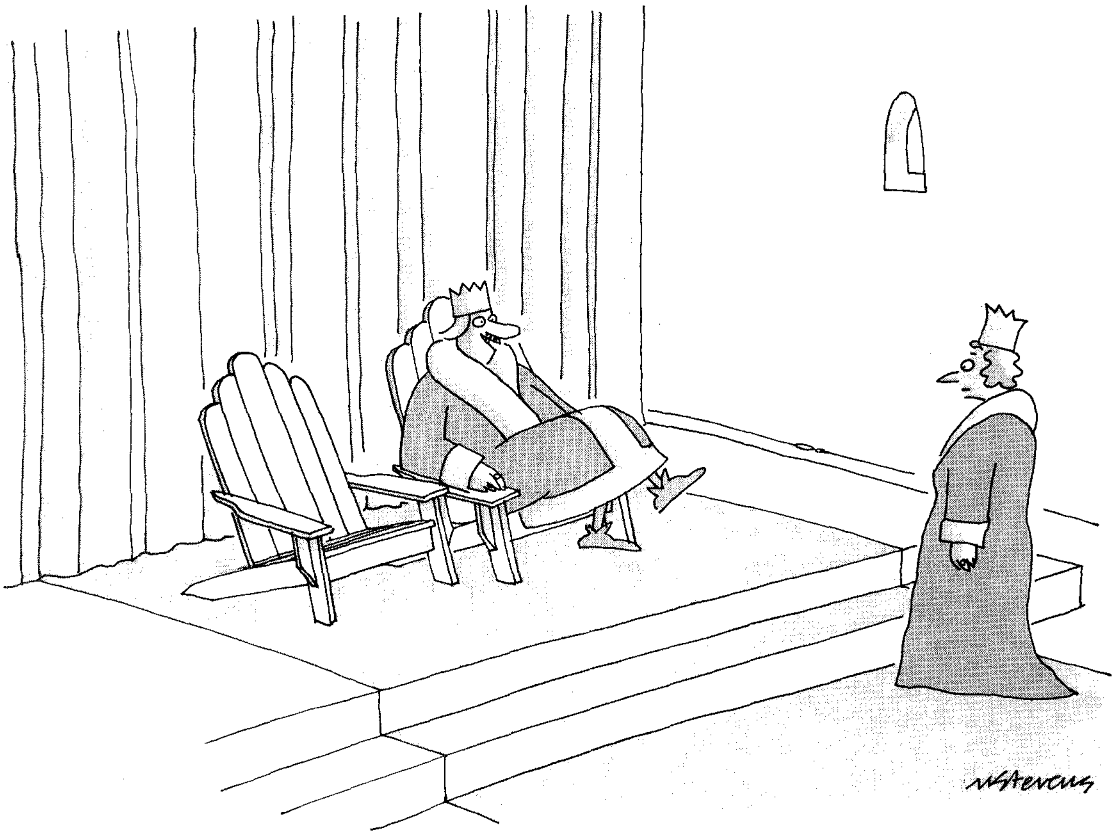
But among these paintings there was one that, perhaps because of its title, caught my attention: "The Enigma of Arrival." I felt that in an indirect, poetical way the title referred to something in my own experience; and later I read (with what truth I don't know) that the titles of these Surrealist paintings of de Chirico's had been given not by the painter but by the poet Apollinaire, who died young, in 1918, from influenza following a war wound, to the great grief of Picasso and others. What was interesting about the painting itself, "The Enigma of Arrival," was that—again perhaps because of the title—it changed in my memory. The original (or the reproduction in the Little Library of Art booklet) was always a surprise. A classical scene, Mediterranean, ancient Roman—or so I saw it. A wharf: in the background, beyond walls and gateways (like cutouts), there is the top of the mast of an antique vessel; on an otherwise deserted street in the foreground, there are two figures, both muffled—one perhaps the person who has arrived, the other perhaps a native of the port. The scene is of desolation and mystery: it speaks of the mystery of arrival. It spoke to me of that, as it may have spoken to Apollinaire.

"Everybody's somebody's contra."

And in the winter gray of the manor grounds in Wiltshire, in the first days of mist and rain, when so little was clear to me, an idea—floating lightly above the book I was working on—came to me of a story I might one day write about that scene in the de Chirico picture. My story was to be set in classical times, in the Mediterranean. My narrator would write plainly, without any attempt at period style or historical explanation of his period. He would arrive—for a reason I had yet to work out—at that classical port with the walls and gateways like cutouts. He would walk past that muffled figure on the quayside. He would move from that silence and desolation, that blankness, to a gateway or door. He would enter there and be swallowed by the life and noise of a crowded city. (I imagined something like an Indian-bazaar scene.) The mission he had come on—family business, study, religious initiation—would give him encounters and adventures. He would enter interiors, of houses and temples. Gradually, there would come to him a feeling that he was getting nowhere; he would lose his sense of mission; he would begin to know only that he was lost. His feeling of adventure would give way to panic. He would want to escape, to get back to the quayside and his ship. But he wouldn't know how. I imagined some religious ritual in which, led on by kindly people, he would unwittingly take part, only to discover that he was the intended victim. At the moment of crisis, he would come upon a door, open it, and find himself back on the quayside of arrival. He has been saved; the world is as he remembered it. Only, one thing is missing now. Above the cutout walls and buildings, there is no mast, no sail. The antique ship has gone. The traveller has lived out his life.

I didn't think of this as a historical story but more as a free ride of the imagination. There was to be no research. I would take pointers from Virgil, perhaps, for the sea and travel and the seasons, from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles for the feel of the municipal or provincial organization of the Roman Empire; I would get moods and the idea of ancient religion from Apuleius; Horace and Martial and Petronius would give me hints for social settings.

The idea of living in my imagination in that classical Roman world was attractive to me. A beautiful, clear,



"Surprise!"

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dangerous world, far removed from the setting in which I had found myself; the story, more a mood than a story, so different from the book on which I was working. A taxing book: it had been occupying me for eight or nine months, and I still hadn't completed a draft. At the center of the book I was writing was a story set in an African country, once a colony, with white and Asian settlers, and now independent. It was the story of a daylong journey made in a car by two white people at a time of tribal war—war suddenly coming, suddenly overwhelming colonial order and simplicity. Africa had given both those white people a chance, made them bigger, brought out their potential; now, when they were no longer so young, it was consuming them. It was a violent book—violent not in its incidents but in its emotions.

It was a book about fear. All the jokes were silenced by this fear. And the mist that hung over the valley where I was writing, the darkness that came early, the absence of knowledge of where I was—all this uncertainty emanating from the valley I transferred to my Africa. And it did not occur to me that the story of "The Enigma of Arrival"—a sunlit sea journey ending in a dangerous classical city—which had come to me as a kind of release from the creative rigors and the darkness of my African story was really no more than a version of the story I was already writing. Nor did it occur to me that it was also an attempt to find a story for—to give coherence to—a dream or nightmare that had been unsettling me. In this dream, there occurred always, at a critical moment in the dream narrative, what I can only describe as an explosion in my head. It was how every dream ended: with this explosion that threw me flat on my back in the presence of people, in a street, a crowded room, or wherever—threw me into this degraded posture in the midst of standing people, threw me into the posture of sleep in which I found myself when I awakened. The explosion was so loud, so reverberating and slow in my head, that I felt, with the part of my brain which, miraculously, could still think and draw conclusions, that I couldn't possibly survive, that I was, in fact, dying—that the explosion this time, in this dream, regardless of the other dreams, which had revealed themselves at the end as dreams, would kill, that I was consciously living through, or witnessing, my own death. And when I awoke my head felt queer, shaken up, exhausted, as though some discharge in my brain had in fact occurred.

This dream or nightmare or internal dramatization—perhaps a momentary turbulence in my brain had created the split-second tableau of the street, the café, the party, the bus where I collapsed in the presence of people—had been with me for a year or more. It was a dream that had been brought on by intellectual fatigue and something like grief.

I had written a lot, done work of much difficulty—had worked under pressure more or less since my school days. Before the writing, there had been the learning; writing had come to me slowly. Before that, there had been Oxford, and, before that, Queen's Royal College, the school in Trinidad where I worked for the Oxford scholarship. There had been a long preparation for the writing career! And then I discovered that to be a writer was not (as I had imagined) a state—of competence, or achievement, or fame, or content—at which one arrived and where one stayed. There was a special anguish attached to the career: whatever the labor of any piece of writing, whatever its creative challenges and satisfactions, time had always taken me away from it. And, with time passing, I felt mocked by what I had already done; it seemed to belong to a time of vigor, now past for good. Emptiness, restlessness built up again; and it was necessary once more, out of my internal resources alone, to start on a book, to commit myself to that consuming process again.

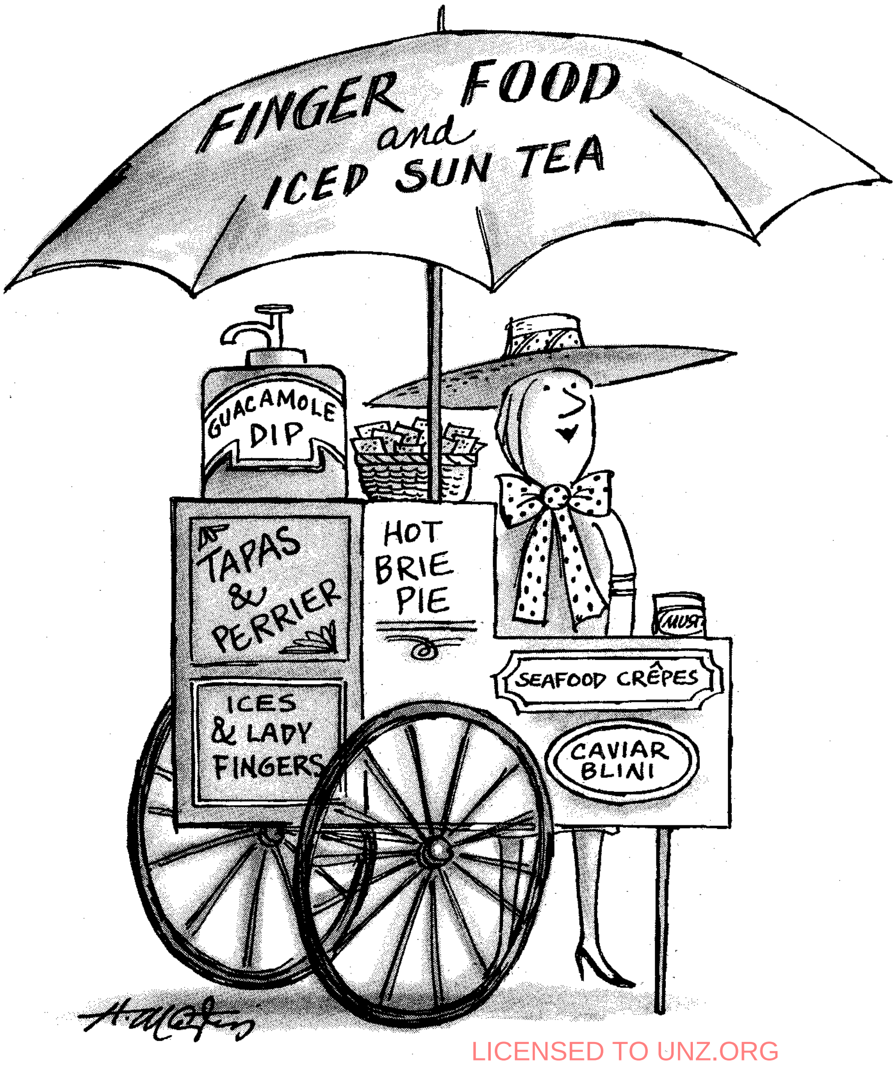
I had finally been undermined. My spirit had broken; and that breaking of the spirit had occurred not long before I came to the valley. For two years, I had worked on a historical book about the region where I was born. The book had grown; and since (beyond a certain length) a big book is harder to write, more exhausting, than a shorter one, I had resisted its growth. But then I had become excited by the story it told. The historian seeks to abstract principles from human events. My approach was the other; for the two years that I lived among the documents, I sought to reconstruct the human story as best I could.

It was a labor. Ten or twelve documents—called up from memory, almost like personal memories—might provide the details for a fairly short and simple paragraph of narrative. But I was supported by my story, the themes it touched on: discovery, the New World, the dispeopling of the discovered islands; slavery, the creation of the plantation colony; the coming of the idea of revolution; the chaos after revolutions in societies so created.

A great, packed education those two years had been. And I had such faith in what I was writing, such faith in the grandeur of my story, that I thought it would find the readers that my books of the previous twelve years had not found. And I behaved foolishly. Without waiting for that response, I dismantled the little life I had created for myself in England and prepared to leave, to be a free man.

For years, in that far-off island whose human history I had been discovering and writing about, I had dreamed of coming to England. But my life in England had been savorless, and much of it mean. I had taken to England all the rawness of my colonial's nerves, and those nerves had more or less remained—nerves that in the beginning were in a good part also the nerves of youth and inexperience, of physical and sexual inadequacy, and of undeveloped talent. And, just as once, at home, I had dreamed of being in England, so for years, in England, I had dreamed of leaving England. Now, eighteen years after my arrival, it seemed to me that the time had come. I dismantled the life I had bit by bit established, and prepared to go. The house I had bought and renovated in stages I sold, and my furniture and books and papers went to the warehouse.

GENTRIFICATION OF TIMES SQUARE



The calamity occurred four months later. The book in which I had placed such faith, the book that had exhausted me so much, could not please the publisher who had commissioned it. We had misunderstood one another. He knew only my name; he did not know the nature of my work. And I had misunderstood his interest in me. He had approached me as a serious writer, but he had wanted only a book for tourists, something much simpler than the book I had written—something at once more romantic and less romantic, at once more human and less human. So I found myself up in the air. And less than a year after I had left—for good, as I thought—I had to return to England.

That journey back (from the island and continent I had gone to see with my new vision: the corner of the New World I had just written about) so mimicked and parodied the journey of nineteen years before—the journey of the young man, the boy almost, who had journeyed to England to be a writer in a country where the calling had some meaning—that I couldn't but be aware of all the cruel ironies.

It was out of this grief, too deep for tears or rage—grief that began to be partly expressed in the dream of the exploding head—that I began to write my African story, which had come to me as a wisp of an idea in Africa three or four years before. The African fear with which as a writer I was living day after day; the unknown Wiltshire; the cruelty of this return to England; the dread of a second failure; the mental fatigue—all of this, rolled into one, was what lay on my spirit. And it was out of that burden of emotion that there had come to me, as release, as an idyll, the ship story, the antique-quayside story, suggested by "The Enigma of Arrival"—an idea that came innocently, without the writer's suspecting how much of his life, how many aspects of his life, that remote story (still just an idea for a story) carried. But that is why certain stories or incidents suggest themselves to writers, or make an impression on them; that is why writers can appear to have obsessions.

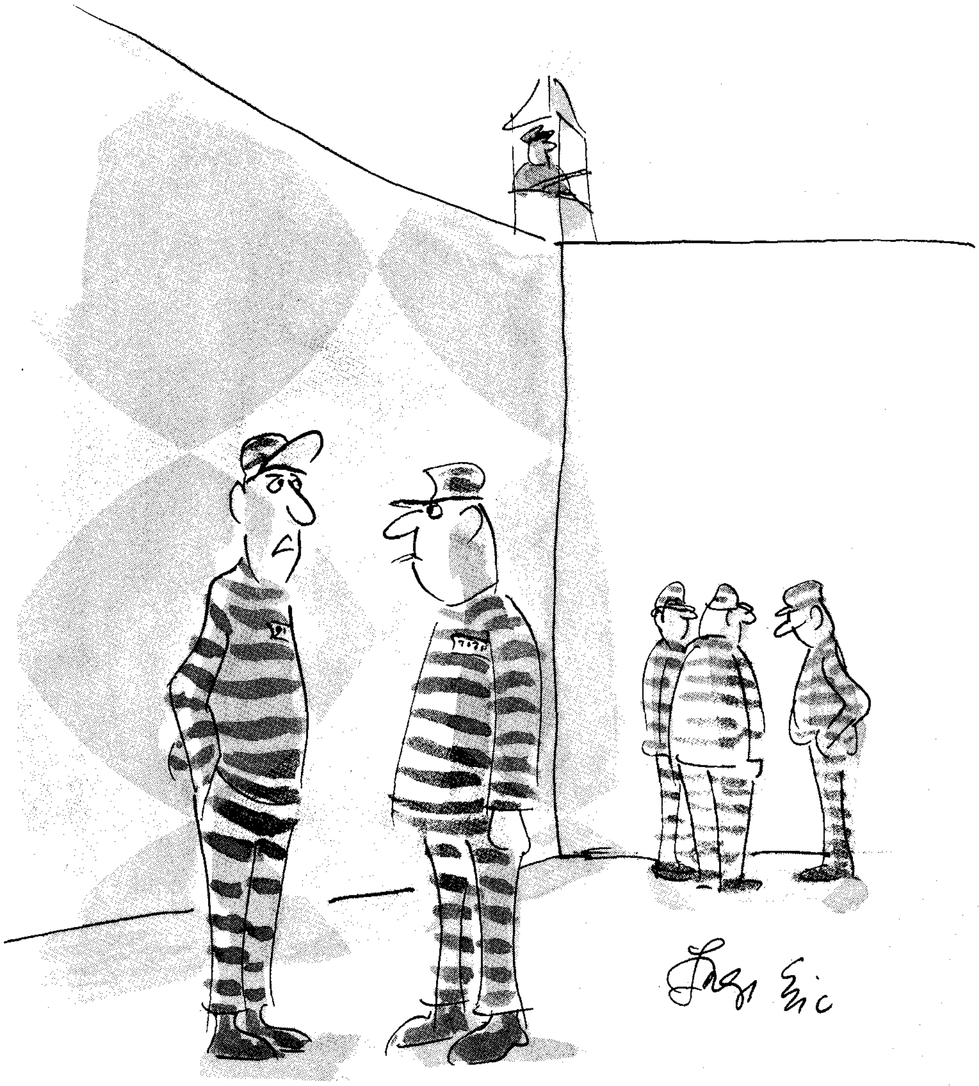
INDEED, there had been a journey long before—the journey that had seeded all the others, and had indirectly fed that fantasy of the classical world. There had been a journey, and a ship.

This journey began some days before my eighteenth birthday, in late

July, 1950. It was the journey that for a year I had feared I would never be allowed to make. So that even before the journey I lived with anxiety about it.

There had, first, been an airplane—a small one of the period, narrow, with a narrow aisle, and flying low. This had given me my first revelation: the landscape of my childhood seen from the air, and from not too high up. At ground level, so poor to me, so messy, so full of huts and gutters and bare front yards and straggly hibiscus hedges and shabby back yards: views from the roadside. From the air, though, a landscape of logic and larger pattern: the straight lines and regularity and woven, carpetlike texture of sugarcane fields, so extensive from up there, leaving so little room for people, except at the very edges; the large, unknown area of swampland, curiously still, the clumps of mangrove and brilliant-green swamp trees casting black shadows on the milky-green water; the forested peaks and dips and valleys of the mountain range. A landscape of clear pattern and contours, absorbing all the roadside messiness: a pattern of dark green and dark brown, like camouflage, like a landscape in a book, like the landscape of a real country. So that at the moment of takeoff, almost—the moment of departure—the landscape of my childhood was like something I had missed, something I had never seen.

Minutes later, the sea. It was wrinkled, as in the fragment of the poem by Tennyson. It glinted in the sun; it was gray and silver rather than blue; and, again as in the fragment by Tennyson, it did crawl. And then the little airplane rose just above the clouds and flew like that, just above the clouds, until we reached Puerto Rico. From someone who had travelled to Jamaica, perhaps in an even smaller airplane, five years before, I had heard about the beauty of the clouds seen from the top. So this was a beauty and an experience that I was ready for, and was overwhelmed by. Always, above the cloud, the sun! So solid the cloud, so pure. I could only look and look; truly to possess that beauty, to feel that one had come to the end of that particular experience, was impossible. To see what so few men had seen! Always there, the thing seen, the world above the clouds, even when unperceived; up there (as down below, sometimes, at sunset) one's mind could travel back—and forward—aeons.



"Crime, as I conceptualized it, didn't pay."

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We droned on to Puerto Rico. It was late afternoon. Another country already, after only a few hours. Travel! Another language; people of mixed race—mulattoes—but subtly different from the mixed people of my own place.

There was a Negro in the hangar. (Or so the place seemed to me. There was no airport terminal to speak of; air travel, though a luxury, still had in those days a rough-and-ready side.) The Negro was from the little airplane. I asked him whether he was from Trinidad. Of course he was. I knew that. I had seen him in the plane. But I asked him. Why? Friendship? I didn't need that. I noted the falsity in my behavior. In the hangar, or shed, there was a man from another plane, or waiting for another plane, who was reading that day's edition of the New York *Times*. This large world had always existed outside my little island—like the sun above the clouds, always there, even when unperceived. And this large world was now within reach!

For eight hours—or was it thirteen?—we drove on in a dark sky to New York. Hours away from the life of my island, where nothing had savor, and even the light had a life-killing quality (as I thought), I lived—like any peasant coming for the first time to a capital city—in a world of marvels. I had always known that this world existed, but to find it available to me for only the price of a fare was nonetheless staggering. With the marvels, however, there went, as in a fairy story, a feeling of menace. As the little plane droned and droned through the night, the idea of New York became frightening. Not the city so much as the moment of arrival: I couldn't visualize that moment. It was the first traveller's panic I had experienced.

I wrote my diary. I had bought, for that purpose, a cheap little lined pad with a front cover that held envelopes in a pocket. I also had an "indelible" mauve pencil, of the sort that serious people in Trinidad—especially officials—used in those days. When you licked the pencil, the color became bright; dry, the color was dull. I had bought the pad and the pencil because I was travelling to become a writer, and I had to start.

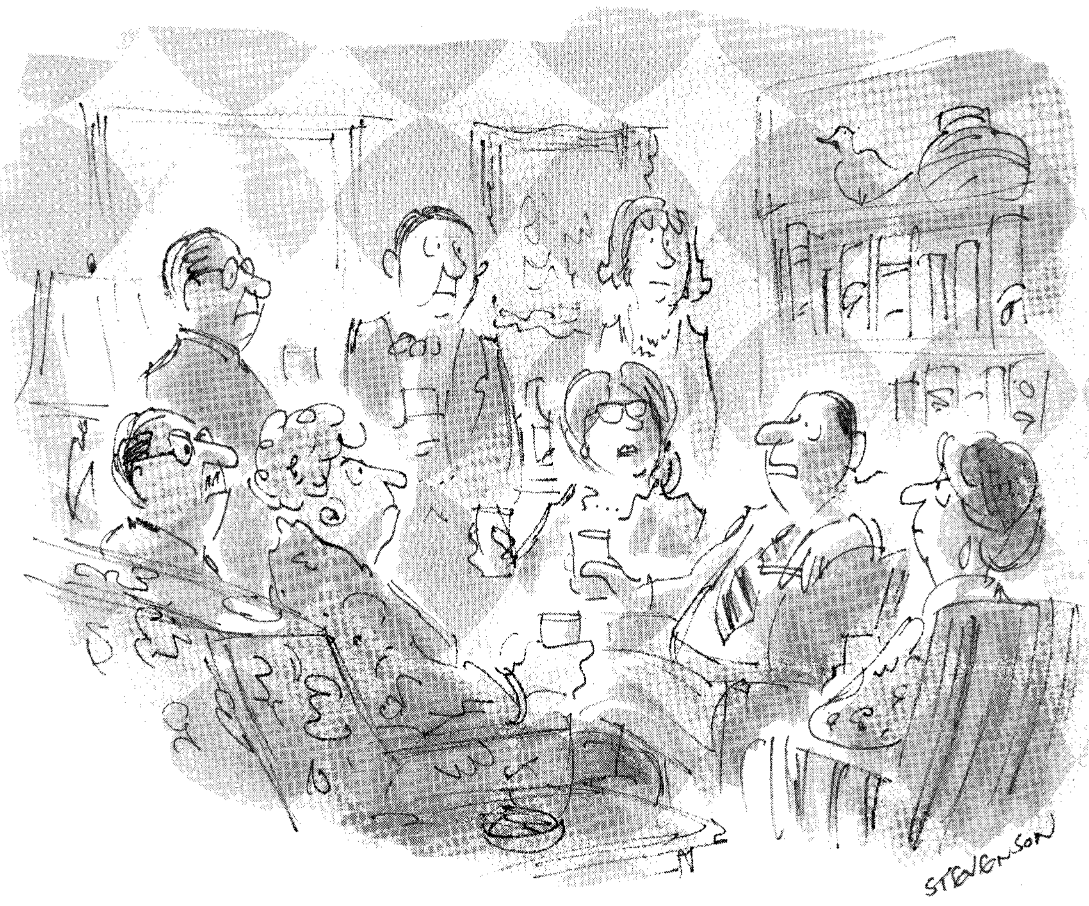
I asked the stewardess to sharpen my pencil. I did so partly to taste the luxuriousness of air travel. The plane was small, but it offered many little services, or so the airline advertisements said. This request to the stewardess was in the nature of a challenge; and to my amazement the stewardess, white and American and, to me, radiant and beautiful and adult, took my request seriously, brought the pencil back beautifully sharpened, and called me, two weeks away from being eighteen, "sir."

So I wrote my diary. But it left out many of the things that were worth noting down, many of the things that some years later I would have thought much more important than the things I did note down. The diary I wrote in the airplane left out the great family farewell at the airport in Trinidad—the airport building like a little timber house with a little garden at the edge of the asphalt runway. Nor did I write about something I would certainly have written about not many years later, when I had begun to work toward some understanding of the nature of my experience—the cousin and his advice at the airport.

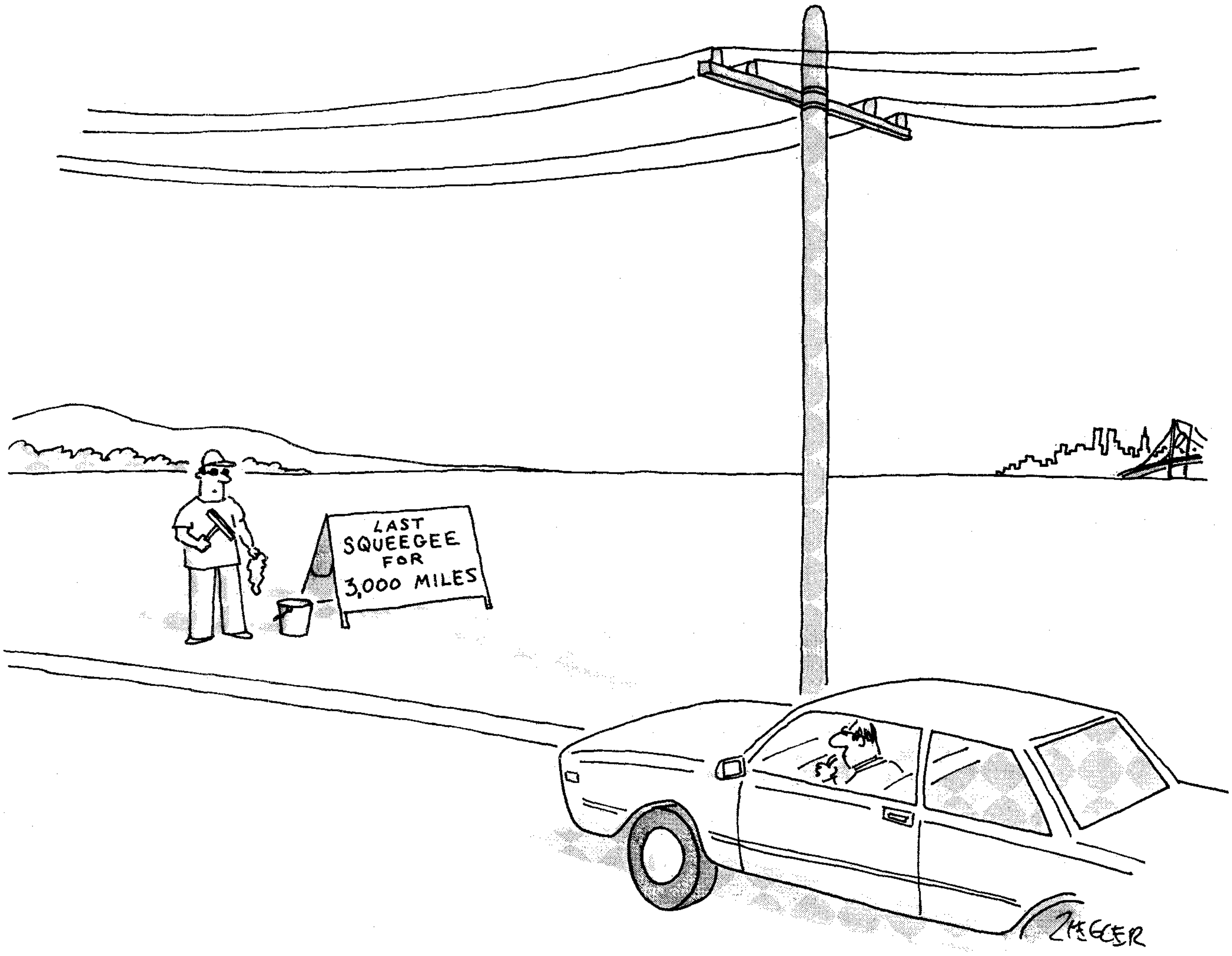
This cousin was a half-witted, or certainly dim-witted, fellow who had developed a little paunch at the age of fifteen or so, had kept it ever since, and had in some bizarre way—without any knowledge of grammar or feeling for the English language or any other language—made himself a journalist. He had no good will toward me. Perhaps he even had ill will; perhaps he would have easily—not out of any positive malice but halfheartedly, as befitted his character, and out of a simple principle of family hate—done the equivalent of sticking pins in my effigy. But he was moved by the occasion, or felt he had to act up to it. And at that crowded farewell at the airport, where a few people (some of whom I didn't know) were even managing to cry, this cousin came up to me and, as though passing on a secret handed to him, a journalist, from the highest quarter—from the airport manager, from the director of Pan American World Airways, or from God himself—whispered, "Sit at the back of the airplane. It's safer there." (Travel was still an adventure, by sea or by air. And it may be that what my cousin said about sitting at the back of the plane was right. Perhaps, though—and more likely—his advice was based on the child's comic-strip idea of the airplane crash: the plane diving down, crashing on its nose.)

I didn't write about this cousin and his advice in my diary, because—like the family sendoff, the remnant of peasant Asia in my life—the frivolous advice did not seem suitable to my work, which was about a more epic vision of the world and about a more epic kind of personal adventure. But though personal adventure was my theme I was in no position to write about something more important—the change in my personality which travel and solitude had already begun to bring about. The intimations of this alteration were very slight. In five years, I was to see very clearly that the family farewell and my cousin's advice were literary "material." But it was to be many years after that before the alterations in my personality, or the slight intimations I was beginning to have of those alterations—intimations that were minute fractions of that first day's adventure—acquired their proper proportions.

There had been the Negro in the hangar, or airport shed, in Puerto Rico, where after many hours and in the late afternoon our little airplane had made its first halt. Already, the light had changed; the world had changed. The world had ceased to be colonial for me; people had already altered their value, even this Negro. He was bound for Harlem. At home, among his fellows, just a few hours before, he was a man to be envied, his journey indescribably



"Let's be realistic. Are we all going to try to keep this party afloat, or should we just go home and forget it?"



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glamorous; now he was a Negro, in a straw-colored jacket obviously not his own, too tight across his weight lifter's shoulders. (Weight lifting was a craze among us.) Now, in that jacket (at home, the badge of the traveller to the temperate North), he was bluffing it out, insisting on his respectability, on not being an American Negro, on not being fazed by the airplane and by the white people.

He was not an educated man, not someone I would have sought out at home. Yet already I had sought him out, and even claimed kinship with him. Why? I felt the gestures of friendship to be false even as I made them. In his tight, respectable jacket, he was cool with me; and I was half glad he was, because friendship, chat, with him wasn't what I wanted. But I had made the gesture. If I had been asked whether I was feeling solitary, vulnerable, I would have said that the opposite was true—that I was in a state of great excitement, that I was loving everything, that everything I had seen so far in the second half of that great day was new and wonderful.

He was cool, the Trinidad man, buttoned up, his eyes quiet, no shine to his color, which had, rather, a matte or dead quality that spoke of tension. I let him be. I stayed by myself. The light yellowed, darkened. Then we were airborne again.

MY memories of my arrival late at night in New York are vague. I think back hard now, and certain details become clearer: a very bright building, dazzling lights, a little crowd in a small space, a woman official with a very sharp "American" accent calling out the names of certain passengers.

There was a letter for me. A man from the British Consulate should have met me. But the plane had been delayed, so he had gone home, leaving this letter, which gave me only the name of the hotel he had booked me into. He should have protected me. He left me at the mercy of the taxi-driver who took me into the city. The driver cheated me, charged too much; and then, seeing how easily I acquiesced, he stripped me of the few remaining dollars I had on me (I had a few more, a very few, hidden in my suitcase) by claiming them as a tip. I felt this humiliation so keenly that memory blurred it soon, and then eradicated it for many years.

I preferred to remember the taxi-driver as being talkative, because that was the way taxi-drivers were. I worked hard at remembering what he had said ("We sold the Japs all our scrap metal and they shot it right back at us"). And I remembered the Negro (he must have occurred in the hotel) who talked like a Negro in a book or a film ("Dis city never sleeps" or "Dis city sho don' sleep, man") and whom I couldn't tip, because I had no money on me. The talkative taxi-driver, the quaintly spoken Negro—I cherished them because I felt I knew them, because I felt they were confirming so much of what I had read, were confirming so much of my advance information. They reassured me that I was indeed travelling, and was already in New York. And in their familiar aspect they were "material," suitable for the writer. But the humiliation connected with each (the driver's theft; my inability to tip the Negro, who was expecting me to play a character role, too, and give him a tip) got in the way, and they were edited out of my memory for twenty years. They were certainly edited out of the diary that I wrote with the indelible pencil (already a little blunt) that evening in the hotel (on the hotel paper, for the extra drama).

A family farewell in the morning, thousands of miles away: a farewell to my past, my colonial past and peasant-Asiatic past. Immediately, then, the exaltation: the glimpse of the fields and the mountains that I had never seen; the rippled or wrinkled sea crawling; then the clouds from above, and thoughts of the beginning of the world, thoughts of time without beginning or end; the intense experience of beauty. A faint panic then, even an acted panic; then a dwindling of the sense of the self. A suppressed, half-true, but also half intensely true diary being written in a small, dark room in the Hotel Wellington in New York. And already a feeling of being lost, of truth not fully faced, of a world whose great size I had seized being made at night very small for me again.

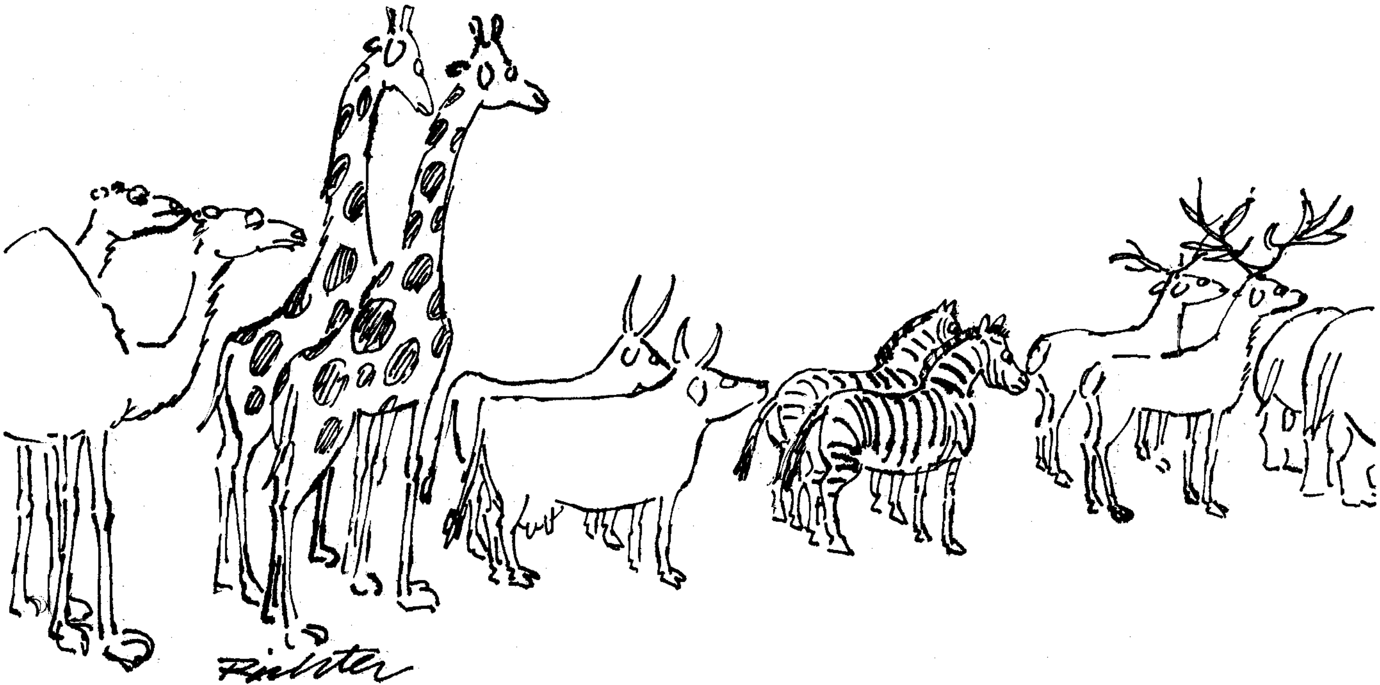
I had come to New York with some bananas. I had eaten some on the plane and left the others behind, guiltily but correctly. (They would almost certainly have been taken from me by the authorities.) I had also been given a roasted chicken, or half a roasted chicken: my family's peasant, Indian, Hindu fear about my food, about pollution. But I had no knife, no fork, no plate, and didn't know that these things might have been got from the hotel; wouldn't have known how to set about asking, especially at that very late hour. I ate over the wastepaper basket, aware as I did so of the smell, the oil, the excess at the end of a long day. In my diary I had written of the biggest things, the things that befitted a writer. But the writer of the diary was ending his day like a peasant, like a man reverting to his origins, eating secretively in a dark room and then wondering how to hide the high-smelling evidence of his meal. I dumped it all in the wastepaper basket. After this, I needed a bath, or a shower.

The shower was in my own room: a luxury. I had dreaded having to use a communal one. One tap was marked "HOT." Such a refinement I had never seen before. In Trinidad, in our great heat, we had always bathed or showered in water of normal temperature, the water of the tap. A hot shower! I was expecting something tepid, like the warm bathwater (in buckets) that my mother prepared for me (mixed with aromatic and medicinal neem leaves) on certain important days. The hot water of the Hotel Wellington shower wasn't like that. Hot was hot. Barely avoiding a scalding, I ducked out of the shower cubicle.

So the great day ended. And then—it was my special gift, and remained so for nearly twenty years, helping me through many crises—I fell asleep as soon as I got into bed, and didn't wake up again until I had slept out all my sleep.

My memory retains nothing of the hotel room in daylight, nothing of the room in which I awakened. Perhaps, then, some embarrassment obliterated the memory. I was less than twenty-four hours out of my own place, and the humiliations had begun to bank up: to my own developed sense of the self was now added another sense of the self—a rawness of nerves and sensibility against which from now on for many years all my impressions, even the most exalted, were to be set. As were the impressions of the morning, the ones that remained with me—impressions that (after the humiliations of the previous evening, the humiliations of arrival) resumed the romance.

The newsstand downstairs, in the lobby of the Wellington, was part of this romance: a little shop in the building where one lived—it was quite new to me, quite enchanting. I bought a packet of cigarettes from the man who was selling—a tall, gray-haired man, as well dressed and formal and educated, I thought, as a teacher. (Not like the Indian shopkeepers of our country villages—men who kept themselves deliberately dirty and ragged, the dirtier the better, to avoid hubris, to deter jealousy and the evil eye. Not like the Chinese in their "parlors," who wore sleeveless undershirts and khaki shorts and wooden clogs, stayed indoors all the time, and, in spite of their wizened, famine-stricken, opium-den appearance, fathered child after child on happy black concubines or blank-faced, flat-chested Chinese wives.) From the tall gray-haired man I bought a packet of Old



Golds. I had no palate in tobacco, couldn't tell the difference between brands, and went mainly by things like names. In Trinidad, only locally made or English cigarettes were sold in the shops; American cigarettes were available, informally and in quantity, because of the American bases, but were never sold in the shops. This ability to buy a packet of American cigarettes, from the whole range of American names, was wonderful. As was the price, twenty cents, and the book of matches that came with it. Largesse!

The sensuousness of those soft American cigarette packets! The cellophane, the name of the brand, the paper of the packet outlining the shapes of the cigarettes; the thin red paper ribbon at the top of the packet which enabled you to undo the cellophane; the delicious smell. Cigarettes had always been for me an aesthetic experience—the flavor of burning tobacco I had never cared for—so the smoking addiction, when it came, had been severe. And if I had already stopped smoking many times at home it was because I had been for many months during the past worrying year denying myself things—at one stage even (secretly) denying myself food—out of a wish not to lose my scholarship, the scholarship that was to take me to England and Oxford: which was a wish not so much to go to Oxford as to get out of Trinidad and see the great world and make myself a writer. Such passion, such longing had gone into this journey, which was less than a day old!

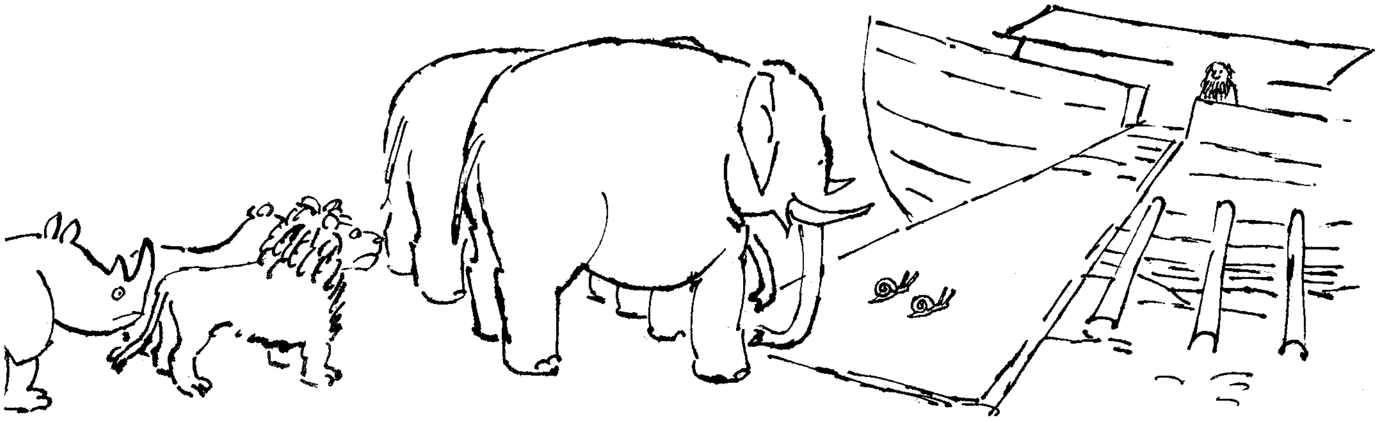
From the teacherlike gray-haired man at the newsstand I also bought a copy of the New York *Times*, the previous day's issue of which I had seen at Puerto Rico. I was interested in newspapers and knew this paper to be one of the foremost in the world. But to read a newspaper for the first time is like coming into a film that has been on for an hour. Newspapers are like serials. To understand them, you have to take knowledge to them; the knowledge that serves best is the knowledge provided by the newspaper itself. It made me feel a stranger, that paper. But on the front page of the second section, at the bottom, there was a story to which I could respond, because it dealt with an experience I was sharing. The story was about the weather. Apparently, it was unseasonably wet and gray, so unseasonable that it was worth a story.

Without the paper, I would not have known that the weather was unseasonable. But I did not need the paper to make me see the enchantment of the light. The light indoors in the hotel was like the light outdoors. The outdoor light was magical. I thought it was created by the tall buildings, which, with some shame, I stopped to look up at, to get their size. Light indoors flowed into light outdoors: the light here was one. In Trinidad, from seven or eight in the morning to five in the afternoon the heat was great; to be out-of-doors was to be stung, to feel the heat and discomfort. This gray sky and gray light, light without glare, suggested a canopied, protected world: no need, going outside, to brace oneself for heat and dazzle. And the city of protected-feeling streets and tall buildings was curiously softly colored. I hadn't expected that, hadn't seen that in photographs or read about it. The colors of the New York streets would have appeared to me in Trinidad as "dead" colors, the colors of dead things: dried grass, dead vegetation, earth, sand, a dead world—hardly colors at all.

I went walking. In my memory, there is only one walk. But I believe now that there would have been two, with a taxi ride in between (to check up on the sailing time of the ship that was to take me away that afternoon). Without the money in the suitcase, I would have been penniless, so at least that precaution had served.

I saw a cinema advertising "Marius," with Raimu. The advertisement was in movable letters. I had never seen a French film in my life. But I knew much about French cinema. I had read about it, and I had even in some way "studied" it, in case a question about it came up in an exam. So much of my education had been like that—abstract, a test of memory: I had been like a man denied the chance of visiting famous cities and learning their street maps instead.

"Marius," Raimu. One name was an anagram of the other, bar the "s" (my monkish way of observing, studying, committing to memory). And if it had been afternoon, and if I hadn't had a ship to take, I would have gone, for at home that was where, imaginatively, I lived most profoundly: in the cinema. Really, over and above that quirk of literary ambition, there was a



great simplicity to my character. All my life, from the moment I became self-aware, had been devoted to study. And then this idea of abstract study had been converted into an idea of a literary life in another country. That had committed me to further, more desperate, more consuming study—had committed me to further withdrawal. My real life, my literary life, was to be elsewhere. In the meantime, at home, I lived imaginatively in the cinema—a foretaste of that life abroad. On Saturday afternoons, I went to the special holiday shows that began at one-thirty (and which we simply called “one-thirties,” rather in the way other people might speak of matinées), and it was painful, after the dark cinema and the remote realms where one had been living for three hours or so, to come out into the very bright colors of one's own world.

But I had not seen any French films. None had ever been shown in Trinidad. And perhaps, like British films, if they had been shown they would have found no audience, being of a particular country—local, not universal, like the Hollywood pictures, which could quicken the imaginations of remote people. I knew French films from books. And now, less than a day into my great adventure, seeing the name “Marius” and its near-anagram “Raimu” on the cinema board, I felt I was close to something that was mine by right (by education, vocation, training, yearning, sacrifice), like the New York *Times* itself, which yet (when bought by me) didn't hold me, being like a crossword puzzle I could only partly fill in.

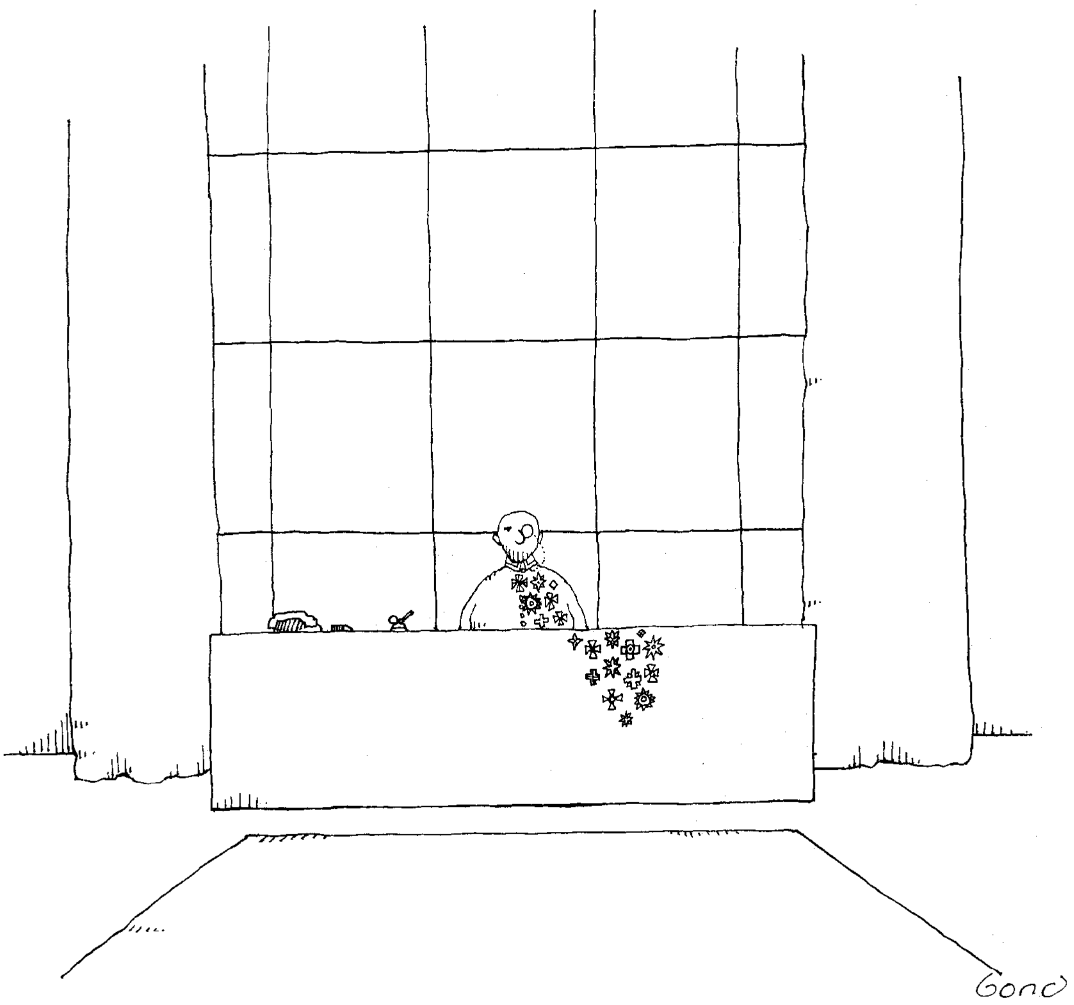
And a similar feeling of being let down by what should have been mine by right came when I found and went into a bookshop. Great cities possessed bookshops—just as they had cinemas that showed French films. Colonial towns or settlements, like my own, didn't have bookshops. In the old colonial main square in Port of Spain, there were emporia that sold schoolbooks and perhaps children's books and coloring books, and had perhaps as well a short shelf or two of Penguin books—a few copies of a few titles—and a few of the Collins Classics (looking like Bibles): emporia as dull as the emporia of those days could be, suggesting warehouses for a colonial population, where absolutely necessary goods (with a few specialist lines, like mosquito nets and the Collins Classics) were imported and stored in as unattractive and practical a way as possible.

And here, in the city of New York, was a bookshop. A place I should have entered as though I had journeyed to enter it. I loved books, I was a reader—it was my reputation at home. But the books I knew, or knew about, were few. There were the books in my father's bookcase: classics from the Everyman series, religious books, books about Hinduism and India. These last had been bought from a trader in Indian goods on a petty commercial street in Port of Spain, and bought, most of them, as a gesture of Indian nationalism; few of them were read by my father, and none by me. There were the books I had studied at school; there were the books I saw in the Central Library. Really, though, I knew only the classic or established names—the French, Spanish, and English books I had studied at school, and the very famous names my father had introduced me to.

To enter this New York bookshop was to find myself among unhallowed names. I was travelling to be a writer, but this world of modern writing and publishing I had walked into was not something I was in touch with. And among all these unfamiliar, unhallowed names I looked for the familiar—the classics, the uniform series, the very things I had looked at (with a feeling of deprivation and of being far away) in the dark colonial emporia of Port of Spain. This was an American shop, not one with English stock, the stock I was more familiar with. I settled, then, for the Modern Library series, and bought “South Wind,” by Norman Douglas. This had been recommended to me by an English teacher who knew of my writing ambitions. I had despaired of finding this book in Trinidad. Here, part of the great wealth of New York, was the

Wm Hamilton

“It must be neat to be so well-bred you don't have to try.”



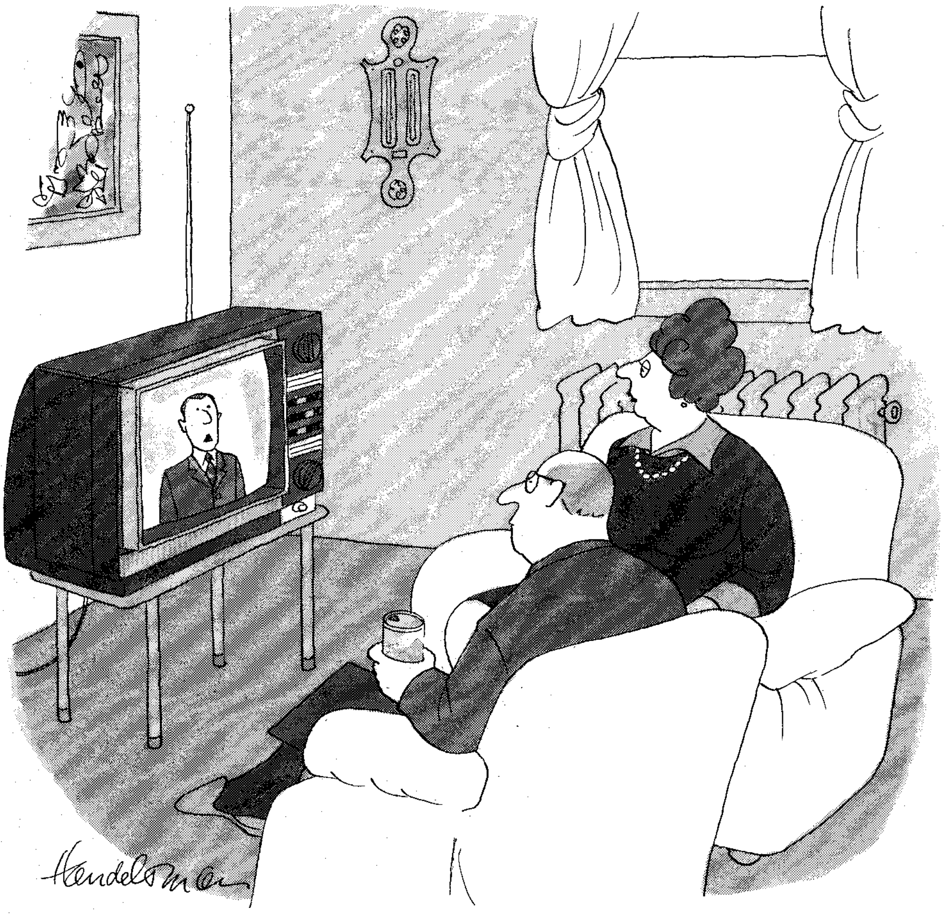
book, immediately available. I paid one-twenty-eight, or so I wrote in my diary, and the assistant, who must have been eight or ten years older than I was, called me "sir."

"South Wind"! But it remained unread. My first attempt to read it was like all the attempts I made later: it showed me that—like the books of Aldous Huxley and D. H. Lawrence and certain other contemporary writers whose names had come to me through my father or through teachers at school—this book, with a young man called Denis, and a bishop, and an island called Nepenthe, was alien, far from anything in my experience, and beyond my comprehension. But the alienness of a book, though it might keep me from reading it (I never read beyond the first chapter of "South Wind"), did not prevent me from admiring it. The very alienness, the inaccessibility, was like a promise of romance—a reward, some way in the future, for making myself a writer.

So much of my education had been abstract that I could live like this and think and feel like this. I had, for instance, studied classical French drama without having any idea of the country or the court that had produced this drama—without having the capacity to grasp the historical reality of France, and, in fact, quietly (in my own mind) rejecting as a fairy story all that I was told in introductions or textbooks about kings and ministers and mistresses and religious wars. These things were too removed from my experience, and I could not grasp them; I knew only my island and my community and the ways of our colony. So though now, in New York, I was a free man, and this was the first book I was buying in a great city, and the occasion was therefore important, historic for me—romantic—I took to it the abstract attitudes of my school education: the bright boy, the scholarship boy, not acting now for his teachers or family but acting only for himself. Yet, with the humiliations of my first twenty-four hours of travel, my first twenty-four hours in the great world, with my increasing sense of my solitude in this world, I was aware (not having a home audience now, not having any audience at all) that I felt no joy. The young man in the shop called me "sir," and that was unexpected and nice. But I felt a fraud; I felt pushed down into a part of myself where I had never been. Already, I could feel the two sides of myself separating one from the other, the man from the writer. Already, I felt a twinge of doubt about myself: perhaps the writer was only a man with an abstract education, a capacity for concentration, and a capacity for learning things by heart. And I had worked so hard for this day and this adventure! With the new silence of my solitude, this solitude something I had never anticipated as part of the great adventure, I watched the two sides of myself separate and dwindle even on this first day.

And that afternoon in New York, from a pier whose number I carried for many years in my head but have now forgotten—a number associated not with romance but with humiliation and uncertainty—there began a journey on a ship of some days. Port of Spain to Puerto Rico to New York, by air. New York to Southampton, by ship.

THAT journey by ship was for a long time—many weeks, many months: a long time to a boy of eighteen—my most precious piece of writer's material. Or so I saw it. And for a long time—in a boarding house in Earl's Court in London, in the dreariness of my college room in Oxford, and in the greater dreariness of a bed-sitting-room in the holidays, using my indelible pencil or my Waterman pen or the very old typewriter I had bought in London for ten pounds, more than a week's allowance for me (expensive, but new typewriters at that time, the war not being long over, were still not easily available)—I worked on and cherished a piece I called "Gala Night." It was my first piece of writing based on metropolitan material. It was wise; it suggested experience and the traveller. "Gala Night"—it might have been written



"I know what some of you are thinking. You're thinking, 'Ha! He claims to be coming to us live, but he's really on tape.' Well, if that's what you think, I can only say I feel sorry for you."

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by a man who had seen many gala nights. Knowing what it was doing, knowing the value of names, it played easily with great names—New York, the Atlantic, the United States Lines, a ship I will call the S.S. Columbia, Southampton (especially beautiful, as a name, this last).

The gala night that provided the material for this piece of descriptive writing—it was not a story—took place on shipboard on our last full day on the Atlantic. In the morning, we were to call at Cobh, in Ireland; then, the following afternoon, we were to dock at Southampton. Most of the passengers were to get off at Southampton; the others would have got off earlier that same day at Le Havre. The gala night was a dance after dinner in one of the lounges of the tourist class. And it was disturbing to me to see—as from a distance, and as though I were studying a kind of animal life, since no shipboard romance had come to me—how the sexual impulse, like drink, clouded and distorted people I knew, men and women. To me, a lover of women but quite virginal at that time, the distortion in the women I had got to know was especially unsettling.

There was a dainty girl who had spoken to me of poetry. How strange to see her now in the company of a man of no particular education or quality, and to see her moist-eyed, as though worked upon by forces outside her control. There was no recognition of me now in her eyes. And how distant, earnest, and preoccupied hitherto friendly men became, how impatient of conversation with me—conversation they had at other times welcomed. There was a man from San Francisco, an Armenian; he had fought in Europe during the war, and we had talked of the war and the soldier's life. He had told me that the only true war film he had seen was "A Walk in the Sun." His thoughts were now elsewhere.

Part of the trouble was that the gala night was also an occasion of drinking, and I at that time didn't drink at all. To win my scholarship, I had punished myself with study, and because I wished things to go well for me I was still full of ascetic self-castigations.

In what I wrote, I was recording my ignorance and innocence, my deprivations (of which the asceticism was a disingenuous sign) and frustration. But in the intention of the eighteen-year-old boy who was doing the writing "Gala Night" was knowing and unillusioned. So that in the writing, as well as in the man, there was a fracture. To a truly knowing person, the piece would have given itself away in more than one place.

I concentrated toward the end of the piece on the figure of the ship's night watchman. He was standing outside the lounge where the dancing was taking place, and he had begun to address the disconsolate and unlucky men standing outside with him, men to whom, even on this wanton occasion, when dainty girls went dreamy and wild, no shipboard romance had come. He was as divided as I was, and perhaps as the other men were who were listening to him. There was a sourness in their silence. He, the night watchman, was lively; he spoke as a man who had seen it all. He was a heavily built man in his forties; in the lecturing posture he had settled into, his hands, stretched out on either side of him, grasped the rail against which he was leaning. He paused between sentences, to allow the wickedness he was describing to sink in: looking at no one in particular, he pressed his lips together, and then, as if talking to himself, he started again.

People changed after three days on a ship, he said. Faithful wives and girlfriends became faithless. Always, after three days. Men became violent and were ready to fight over women, even men with young and loving wives to whom they had just said goodbye. He said (or in many versions of "Gala Night" I made him say), "I have seen a captain make to kill a guy in this here place."

"Make to," "kill," "guy," "this here place"—the night watchman talked like someone in a film. And that was why, as material, he was so precious to me. That was why the hard indelible pencil traced again and again, in those faint letters (which would brighten and turn purple when dampened), the words he spoke.

In "Gala Night" I looked for metropolitan material; I stuck to people who seemed to me to have this quality. There was a man, originally from the Middle East but now, in spite of his Muslim name, entirely American, who said he was an entertainer. He spoke familiarly of famous stars, stars whose films I had seen, and it never occurred to me to wonder why this entertainer was travelling tourist. He read me some of his material, after the usual three days. "Material"—that was what he called it, and the short and simple jokes were typed. That was impressive and strange and "American" to me. As impressive as that was his way of talking of his time in animated cartoons. They made many cartoons at once, he said. "We make them and we can them." "Can"—I was entranced by the word, so knowing, so casual, so professional. Just as his "material" became part of mine, so his language became part of my material as well. I was having it both ways with him, then: making use as a writer of his metropolitan knowingness, appropriating it, yet keeping myself at a distance from him (not on the ship, only in "Gala Night"), as though he, being only an entertainer (travelling tourist) and dubiously American, were a kind of buffoon (the kind of buffoon such a person should be, in writing of the sort I was aiming at), and as though I—now adrift, supported only by the abstractions of my colonial education—stood on firmer ground than he.

Two Salvation Army girls were also among my material. They were travelling to a conference somewhere in Europe, but they were ready to flirt. This flirtatiousness in religious girls struck me as strange; with my deprivations, I saw oddity where there was none. And there was a young man from the South. He shared the entertainer's cabin. He was heavy and pockmarked, and he wore glasses. In "Gala Night," he appeared—and the scene was written so often by me that in my imagination he remains forever—in undershirt and underpants, sitting on the upper bunk, in the dim top light, peeling and eating an orange and talking about girls, perhaps the Salvation Army girls.

He said, looking down at his orange, "I'm a plodder. I know what I want and I go get it—see?"

That was material for me: I could show the world—writing like that, observing things like that—that I knew the world. I could say, in effect, "I, too, have seen this. And I, too, can write about it."

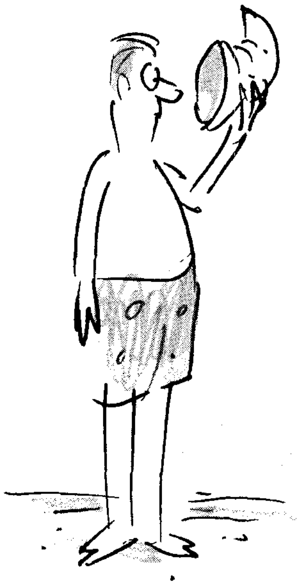
But there was another memory, disconnected from the first. In some versions of "Gala Night," I used it. In other versions, I left it out. The young Southerner was talking about "colored people." He said, "Nowadays, they want to get in your bed and sleep with you."

I was taken aback by that, and then amazed: that he, so full of racial feeling, could talk to me like that, as though he didn't see me racially. But that topic of race—though it was good, familiar material, and could prove my knowledge of the world—formed no part of "Gala Night." It was too close to my disturbance, my vulnerability, the separation of my two selves. That was not the kind of personality the writer wished to assume; that was not the material he dealt in. So that, though travelling to write, concentrating on my experience, eager for experience, I was shutting myself off from it, editing it out of my memory. Editing out the airport taxi-driver who had overcharged me—the humiliation had been too great. Editing out the Negro at the hotel. Nor, as a writer, could I acknowledge the other, hideous anxiety of my day in New York. The journey in a liner across the Atlantic should have been pure romance; the going aboard the ship that afternoon in New York should have been pure romance. But romance was in only one part of my mind; there was something else in another part of my mind. I was nervous about sharing a cabin. For months, I had worried about that aspect of my journey across the Atlantic. I feared being put with aggressive or disagreeable or sexually unbalanced people. I was small and felt my physical weakness. I feared being assaulted; I feared attracting someone's malevolence.

That had been a great anxiety for me. But when I went aboard the ship it had been miraculously resolved. Yet I could not in "Gala Night," wishing to be the kind of writer I wanted to be, write about that.

The British vice-consul in New York had booked a passage for someone who, when he went aboard the ship at the pier in New York, was clearly seen not to be English and was a puzzle to the purser. I remember it only now, so successful was "Gala Night" in cutting out the memory. Only now, laying aside the material of "Gala Night," I remember having to stand about for some hours while they decided where to put me. I would have been unplaced, would have been standing about, worried about my few pieces of luggage, even while the ship was leaving the pier. My sight of New York Harbor and the famous skyline would have been tainted by that standing about. And then someone took

Hoedown



a decision, and the issue was wonderfully resolved.

I was given a cabin absolutely to myself in a higher class. And I was given a key to open the door that separated that class from the tourist class, where I was to continue to live and eat during the day. This was a wonderful piece of luck. Immediately, much of my anxiety left me. I thought it a very good omen for the future. I thought (still with the fear of sharing cabins, compartments, and hotel bathrooms) that I would be blessed with what I thought of then as "traveller's luck."

But late that night I was awakened by a commotion. The top light of the cabin was put on. There were voices. I knew then, I *knew*, what was about to happen. Someone was going to be put with me. Someone else from tourist was going to be given a key to the door that separated the classes, which for some hours that evening I had thought of as a very private possession, almost a secret. And the top light, put on just like that, and the raised voices were so inconsiderate. I closed my eyes. Like a child. Like someone practicing magic. If I pretended to be asleep, if I pretended to know nothing, then nothing might happen, and the people who had come in might all just go away.

But there was trouble. The man who had been brought in was making trouble. He was rejecting the cabin. His voice was rising. He said, "It's because I'm colored you're putting me here with him."

Colored! So he was a Negro. So this was a little ghetto privilege I had been given. But I didn't want the Negro or anybody else to be with me. Especially I didn't want the Negro to be with me, for the very reason the Negro had given.

And he wasn't to be with me. The top light went out; the cabin door closed; the people who had come in went out. And the Negro was no doubt taken back past the barrier door to tourist class and fitted into some crowded three- or four-berth cabin, but with white people. Satisfactory to him, the black man—but at what price, at what cost in strain and tension for the days of the journey across the great Atlantic? Frightening, that glimpse of another man's deprivation and drive. Yet I was also ashamed that they had brought the Negro to my cabin. I was ashamed that, with all my aspirations and all that I had put into this adventure, this was all that people saw in me—so far from the way I thought of myself, so far from what I wanted for myself. And it was shame, too, that made me keep my eyes closed while they were in the cabin.

He, the black man, sought me out the next morning in the lounge of the tourist class to apologize. He was tall, slender, well dressed, with a suggestion of boniness and sharpness below his fine, thin summer suiting: bony knees, sharp shins. He was well spoken, quieter with me than he had been in the cabin. He had thought that the people from the purser's office were genuinely offering him a better and less crowded cabin when they led him beyond the tourist door. But when he saw me he changed his mind. He knew that I had become the nucleus of a little ghetto. He knew the Americans, he said. What else did he tell me? What else was there to him, apart from his racial passion? Was he so restricted? I remember nothing else. I remember no other meeting with him.

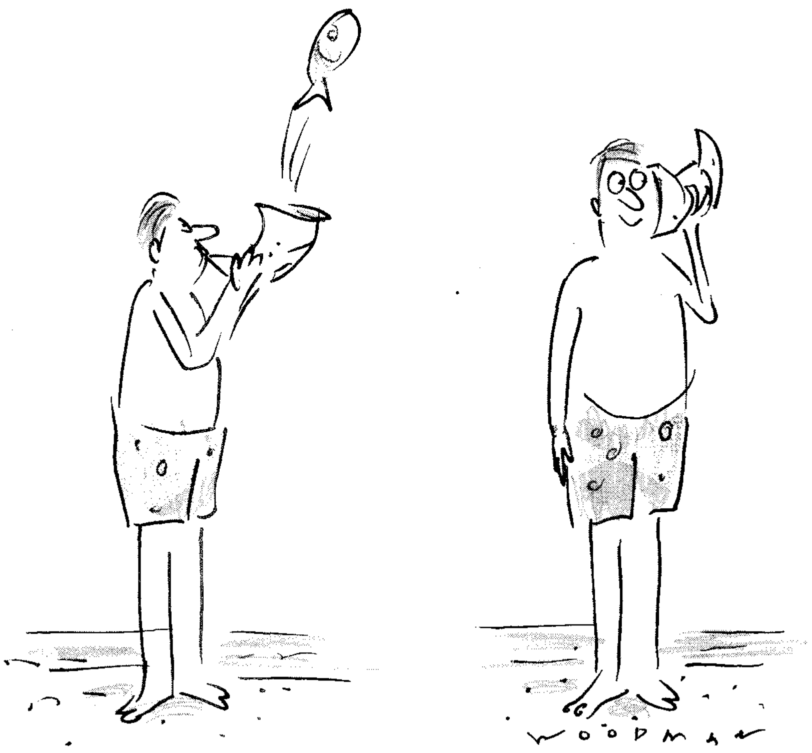
A woman—young, but older than my eighteen—told me more about him one day on deck: he had clearly made an impression on some of the passengers. He was fatigued by American prejudice, the woman said, and she spoke of him with understanding and also a kind of admiration. He was going to live in Germany, she said. His wife was German; they had met when he was serving with the Army in Germany; he had grown to like the German people. Strange pilgrimage!

In Puerto Rico, there had been the Trinidad Negro in a tight jacket on his way to Harlem. Here was a man from Harlem or black America on his way to Germany. In each, there were aspects of myself. But, with my Asiatic background, I resisted the comparison; and I was travelling to be a writer. It was too frightening to accept the other thing, to face the other thing; it was to be diminished as man and writer. Racial diminution formed no part of the material of the kind of writer I was setting out to be. Thinking of myself as a writer, I was hiding my experience from myself—hiding myself from my experience. And even when I became a writer I was without the means, for many years, to cope with that disturbance.

I wrote on with my indelible pencil. I noted dialogue. My "I" was aloof—a man who took notes, and knew.

Night and day, a man stood in the bow of the ship, scanning the gray sea ahead. And when, finally, I landed at Southampton I had for a short while the pleasing sensation that the ground moved below my feet the way the ship had moved for seven days.

AFTER the gray of the Atlantic, there was color. Bright color seen from the train that went to London. Late-afternoon light. An extended dusk: new, enchanting to someone used to the more or less equal division of day and night in the tropics. Light, dusk, at an hour that would have been night at home.



But it was night when we arrived at Waterloo Station. I liked the size, the many platforms, the big, high roof. I liked the lights. Used at home to public places—or those I knew: schools, stores, offices—working only in natural light, I liked this excitement of a railway station busy at night, and brightly lit up. I saw the station people, working in electric light, and the travellers as dramatic figures. The station lights gave a suggestion (such as the New York streets had already given me) of a canopied world, a vast home interior.

After seven days on the liner, I wanted to go out. I wanted especially to go to a cinema. I had heard that in London the cinemas ran continuously; at home, I was used to shows at fixed times. The idea of the continuous show—as the metropolitan way of doing things, with all that it implied of a great, busy populace—was very attractive. But even for London, even for the metropolitan populace of London, it was too late. I went directly to the boarding house in Earl's Court where a room had been reserved for me for the two months or so before I went to Oxford.

It was a small room, long and narrow, made dark by dark, bulky furniture, and bare otherwise, with nothing on the walls. As bare as my cabin on the Columbia; barer than the room I had had in the Hotel Wellington for that night in New York. My heart contracted. But one part of me rejoiced at the view from the window, some floors up, of the bright-orange street lights and the effect of the lights on the trees.

After the warm, rubbery smell of the ship—the smell of the air-conditioning in enclosed cabins and corridors—there were new smells in the morning. A cloying smell of milk; fresh milk was rare to me—we used Klim powdered milk, and condensed milk. That thick, sweet smell of milk was mixed with the smell of soot, and that smell was overlaid with the airless, cockroachy smell of old dirt. Those were the morning smells.

The garden, or yard, or plot of ground, at the back of the house ran to a high wall. Behind that high wall was the Underground station. Romance! The sound of trains there all the time, and from very early in the morning! Speaking directly to me now of what the Negro in the New York hotel had spoken: the city that never slept.

The bathroom and lavatory were at the end of the landing on each floor. Or perhaps on every other floor, because as I was going down there came up a young Asian man, small and small-boned, with a pale-yellow complexion, wearing glasses and an elaborate Asiatic dressing gown that was too big for him in the arms; the wide embroidered cuffs hid his hands. He gave out a tinkling "Goo-ood morning!" and hurried past me. Was he Siamese? Burmese? Chinese? He looked forlorn, far from home. As yet, still full of my London wonder, my own success in having arrived in the city, I did not make the same judgment about myself.

I was going down to the dining room, in the basement. The boarding house offered bed and breakfast, and I was going down to the breakfast. The dining room, at the front of the house—sheltered from the noise of the Underground trains, subject only to the vibration—had two or three people. It had many straight-backed brown chairs; the walls were as blank as the walls of my room. The milk-and-soot smell was strong here. It was morning, light outside, but a weak electric bulb was on; the wall was yellowish, shiny. Wall, light, smell—they were all parts of the wonderful London morning. As was my sight of the steep, narrow steps going up to the street, the railings, the pavement. I had never been in a basement before; it was not a style of building we had at home. But I had read of basements in books, and this room, with an electric light burning on a bright, sunny day, seemed to me romantic. I was like a man entering the world of a novel, a book—entering the real world.

I went and looked around the upper floor afterward, or that part of it which was open to guests. The front room was full of chairs—straight-backed chairs and fat, low upholstered chairs—and the walls were as bare as the walls everywhere else. This was the lounge (I had been told that downstairs); but the air was so still, and such a sooty, old smell came off the dark carpet and the tall, old curtains, that I felt that the room wasn't used. I felt that the house was no longer being used as the builder or first owner had intended. I felt that at one time, perhaps before the war, it had been a private house; and (though knowing nothing about London houses) I felt that it had come down in the world. Such was my tenderness toward London, or my idea of London. And I felt, as I saw more and more of my fellow-lodgers—Europeans from the Continent and North Africa, Asiatics, some English people from the provinces: simple people in cheap lodgings—that we were all, in a way, campers in the big house.

And, coming back night after night—after my tourist excursions through London—to this bare house, I was infected by its mood. I took this mood to what I saw. I had no eye for architecture; there had been nothing at home to train my eye. In London, I saw pavements, shops, shop blinds (almost every other one stencilled at the bottom "J. Dean, Maker, Putney"), shop signs, undifferentiated buildings. On my tourist excursions, I went looking for size. It was one of the things I had travelled to find, coming from my small island. I found size, power in the area around Holborn Viaduct, the Embankment, Trafalgar Square. And after this grandeur there was the boarding house in Earl's Court. So I grew to feel that the grandeur belonged to the past; that I had come to England at the wrong time; that I had come too late to find the England, the heart of Empire, that (like a provincial from a far corner of the Empire) I had created in my fantasy.

Such a big judgment about a city I had just arrived in! But that way of feeling was something I carried within myself. The older people in our Asian-Indian community in Trinidad—especially the poor ones, who could never manage English or get used to the strange races—looked back to an India that became more and more golden in their memory. They were living in Trinidad and were going to die there, but for them it was the wrong place. Something of that feeling was passed down to me. I didn't look back to India, couldn't do so. My ambition caused me to look ahead and outward, to England, but it led to a similar feeling of wrongness. In Trinidad, feeling myself far away, I had held myself back, as it were, from life at the center of things. And there were aspects of the physical setting of my childhood which positively encouraged that mood of waiting and withdrawal.

We lived in Trinidad among advertisements for things that were no longer made or, because of the war and the difficulties of transport, had ceased to be available. (The advertisements in American magazines—for Chris-Craft and Statler Hotels and things like that—belonged to another, impossibly remote world.) Many of the advertisements in Trinidad were for old-fashioned remedies and "tonics." They were on tin, these advertisements, and enamelled. They were used as decorations in shops and, having no relation to the goods offered for sale, they grew to be regarded as emblems of the shopkeeper's trade. Later, when the shanty settlement began to grow in the swampland to the east of Port of Spain, these enamelled tin advertisements were used sometimes as building material.

So I was used to living in a world where the signs were without meaning, or without the meaning intended by their makers. It was of a piece with the abstract, arbitrary nature of my education, like my ability to "study" French or Russian cinema without seeing a film.

What was true of Trinidad seemed to be true of other places as well. In the book sections of the colonial emporia of Port of Spain, there would be a shelf or two of the cheap wartime Penguin paperbacks (narrow margins, crudely stapled, with the staples rusting quickly in our damp climate, but with a wonderful color, texture, and smell to the paper). It never struck me as odd that at the back of those wartime Penguins there should sometimes be advertisements for certain British things (chocolates, shoes, shaving cream) that had never been available in Trinidad and were now (because of the war, as the advertisements said) no longer being made—such advertisements being put in by the former manufacturers only to keep their brand names alive during the war, and in the hope that the war would turn out well. These advertisements—for things doubly and trebly removed from possibility—never struck me as odd; they came to me as an aspect of the romance of the world I was working toward, a promise within the promise, and intensely romantic.

So I was ready to imagine that the world in which I found myself in London was something less than the perfect world I had striven toward. As a child in Trinidad, I had put this world at a far distance—in London perhaps. In London now, I was able to put this perfect world at another time, an earlier time. The mental or emotional processes were the same. In the Underground stations, there were still old-fashioned, heavy vending machines with raised metal letters. No sweets, no chocolates came from them now. But for ten years or so no one had bothered to take them away; they were like things in a house that had broken down or been superseded but had remained unthrown away. Two doors away from my boarding house, there was a bomb site, a gap in the road, with neat rubble where the basement should have been—the dining room of a house like the one in which I lived. Such sites were all over the city. I saw them in the beginning; then I stopped seeing them. Paternoster Row, at the side of St. Paul's Cathedral, hardly existed, but the name still appeared on the title page of books as the London address of many publishers.

My tramps about London were ignorant and joyless. I had expected the great city to leap out at me and possess me—I had longed so much to be in it. And soon, within a week or less, I was very lonely. If I had been less lonely, if I had had the equivalent of my shipboard life, I might have felt different about London and the boarding house. But I was solitary, and didn't have the means of finding the kind of society I had had for the seven days of the Atlantic crossing.

There was the British Council. It ran a meeting place for foreign students like me. But there one evening, the first time I went, I found myself, in conversation with a bored girl, turning to the subject of physical pain, a fearful obsession of mine, made more fearful with the war (and one further explanation of the austerities I practiced at various times). I began to talk of torture, and persevered, though knowing it to be wrong to do so; and was so alarmed by this further distortion of myself that I never went to that British Council place again, for shame.

I had only the boarding house and that curious mixed, silent company of English people, Europeans in limbo, and a few Asiatic students to whom English was difficult. And perhaps that boarding-house life might have meant more to me if I had been better read in contemporary English books—if, for example (not thinking that I knew it because I had seen the film), I had read

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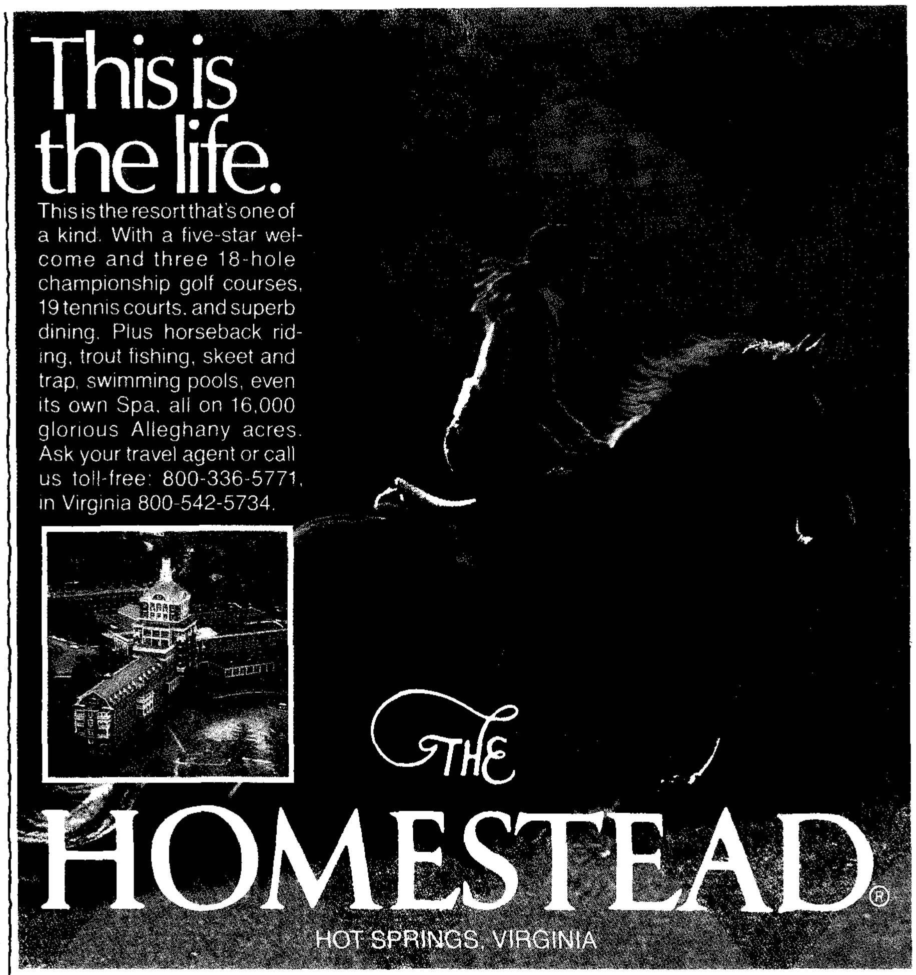
"Hangover Square," the book, by Patrick Hamilton, which was set in the very area just eleven years or so before. A book like that would have peopled the area and made it romantic and given me, always needing these proofs from books, some sharper sense of myself. But in spite of my education I was under-read. What did I know of London? There was an essay by Charles Lamb—in a schoolbook—about going to the theatre. There were two or three lovely sentences—in another schoolbook—about the Embankment, from "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime." But Sherlock Holmes' Baker Street was just its name; and the London references in Somerset Maugham and Waugh and others didn't create pictures in the mind, because they assumed too much knowledge in the reader. The London I knew or imaginatively possessed was the London I had got from Dickens. It was Dickens—and his illustrators—who gave me the illusion of knowing the city. I was therefore, without knowing it, like the Russians I was to hear about (and marvel at) who still believed in the reality of Dickens' London.

And something else occurred in those very early days, the first days of arrival. I lost a faculty that had been part of me and precious to me for years: I lost the gift of fantasy, the dream of the future, of the far-off place where I was going. At home, I had lived most intensely in the cinema, where before the fixed-hour shows the cinema boys, to shut out daylight or electric street light, closed the double doors all around and untied the long cords that kept the high wooden windows open. In those dark halls, I had dreamed of a life elsewhere. Now, in the place that for all those years had been the "elsewhere," no further dream was possible. And while on my very first night in London I had wanted to go to the cinema for the sake of those continuous shows I had heard about—to me the very essence of metropolitan busyness—very soon now the idea of the cinema, the idea of entering a dark hall to watch a moving film, became oppressive to me.

I had little to record. My trampings about London didn't produce adventures, didn't sharpen my eye for buildings or people. My life was restricted to the Earl's Court boarding house. There was a special kind of life there. But I failed to see it. Because, ironically, though feeling myself already drying up, I continued to think of myself as a writer, and, as a writer,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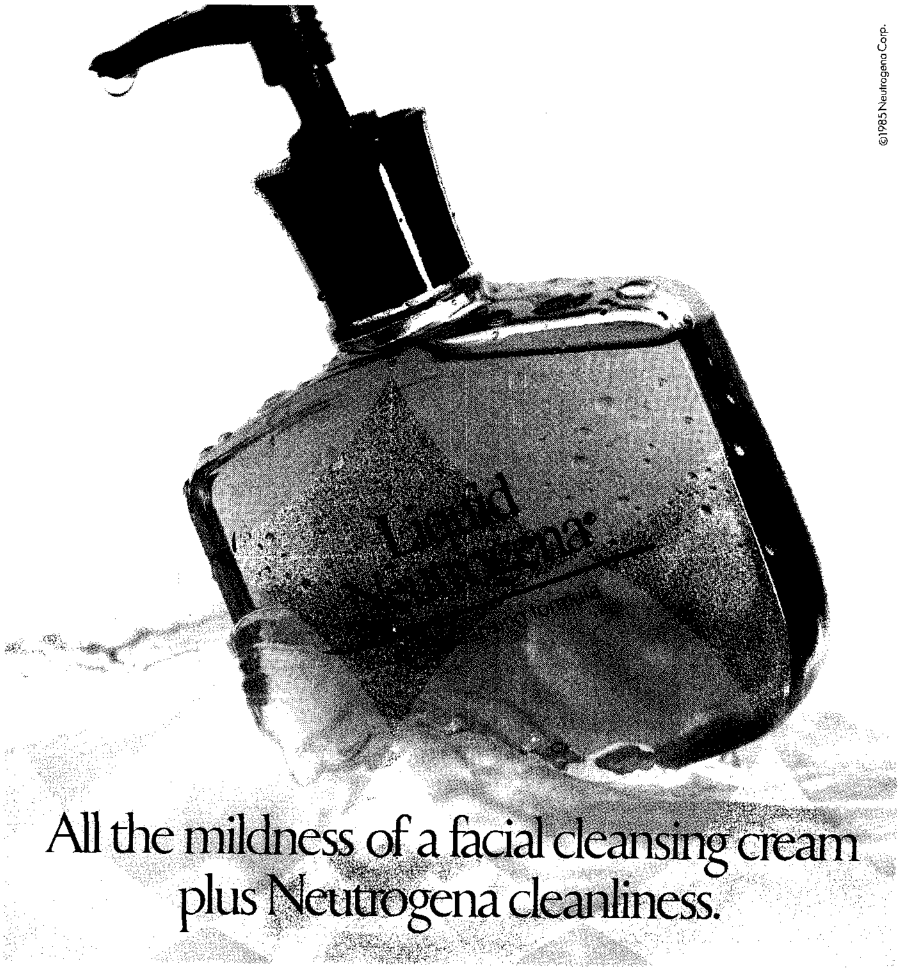

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was still looking for suitable metropolitan material.

"Metropolitan"—what did I mean by that? I had only a vague idea. I meant material that would enable me to compete with or match certain writers. And I also meant material that would enable me to display a particular kind of writing personality: J. R. Ackerley of "Hindoo Holiday," perhaps, making notes under a dinner table in India; Somerset Maugham, aloof everywhere, unsurprised, immensely knowing; Aldous Huxley, so full of all kinds of knowledge and also so sexually knowing; Evelyn Waugh, so elegant so naturally. Wishing to be that kind of writer, I didn't see material in the campers in the big Earl's Court house.

ONE Sunday, not long after I had come to London, I was invited to lunch by the Hardings. Mr. Harding was the manager of the boarding house, but I had seen almost nothing of him or his wife. I had seen more of Angela, whose last name I seldom used and in the end forgot. Angela was Italian, from the south of the country. She was older than I was—ten years, at least—and I saw her as very mature. She had spent all the war in Italy and had somehow fetched up—like many of her friends—in London.

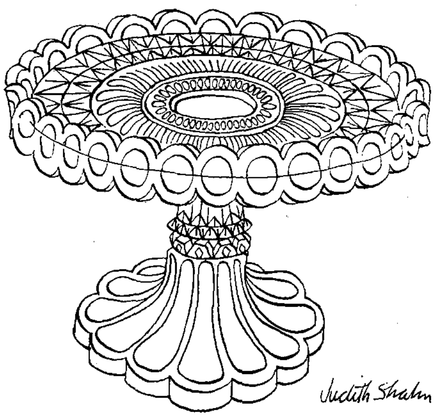
Angela had a room in the house and some kind of position, but I wasn't sure what the position was. She sometimes was in the dining room in the basement, serving the breakfasts; and sometimes she was there in the evening. She also worked on some evenings as a waitress in an Italian restaurant—the Venezia, or some such name—not far from Earl's Court Station; she served the two-and-six or three-and-six dinners. I had the dinner there a few times. It gave me an indescribable pleasure to be in a restaurant where I knew the waitress, even though I didn't understand the menu and didn't particularly like the food.

Angela was the first woman outside my family I had got to know. There was an easiness about her from the start. I found her very attractive and—still a virgin myself—was half in love with her. This acquaintance with Angela gave me, fleetingly, a little metropolitan excitement, told me I was far from home and in a great city in Europe. The boarding house; the Underground at the back of the house, and the entrance to the many-platformed station just around the corner; the Italian restaurant, the waitress one knew. I liked the setting and the props; they were part of the drama; they gave me a sense of myself as a metropolitan man just for a minute or so.

Angela gave me a certain amount of encouragement. She told me she liked me; she told me my color was like the color of some people in her country. But there was a man in her life, an Englishman she had met in Italy during the war. He was a rough, common man, liable to become violent. I never saw him; it was Angela herself who described her lover in that way—half asking you to condemn the man, half asking for sympathy for herself, speaking of the relationship as though it were something unavoidable.

She said that one night, during a quarrel, he had become so violent that she had run out of the room or flat naked except for a fur coat, which she had grabbed as she ran. She had decided after that to live by herself. That was when she had moved to the Earl's Court house. Her lover was absent; at least, I never saw him. Was he in a foreign country? From things that other people said, I gathered that he might have been in jail. But I didn't raise the question with Angela, and she didn't say. I should have asked her, but because of my feelings for her I didn't want to. She was loyal to this man nonetheless. And the encouragement she gave me was oddly chaste. Her room was open to me, but it was only when she had other visitors that she encouraged me to be playful—as though witnesses made my playfulness all right. She was more distant and careful when there were no other visitors.

It was because of Angela—in fact, as Angela's friend—that I went to the Sunday lunch given by Mr. Harding and his wife. Mr. Harding I had hardly seen. And even after this lunch, which became part of my "metropolitan" material—something I obsessively wrote about for many months, altering the reality to make it fit my idea of what was good material, suitable for someone like me to write about—I had no impression of what the man and his wife looked like.



The lunch was in a large room on the ground floor at the back of the house. The walls were as stripped as the walls of the other rooms in the house, as though the war itself had visited some disaster, some looting, on the house. I gathered that this back room was part of the quarters or rooms that the Hardings enjoyed as managers of the boarding house.

The tall windows looked out onto the garden—or, more properly, untended ground—that ran to the high brick wall of the Underground station. There was a tree; there was a view of trees in neighboring plots. The ground was bare in the shadow of the brick wall of the Underground station. It was not unpleasant to me: I liked the colors; I liked the feel of a space enclosed and shaded but cool.

There were other friends of the Hardings. Mr. Harding was the star of the lunch. I believe he was drunk. He wasn't incapacitated, but he had been drinking. Mrs. Harding—again, I have no picture of her—and Angela looked after the serving of the lunch. Mr. Harding talked. He was not only the star but also the comic turn; he had a strong idea of who he was, and he talked with the confidence of a man who was among people he knew, people who would laugh at his jokes and be impressed by his manner.

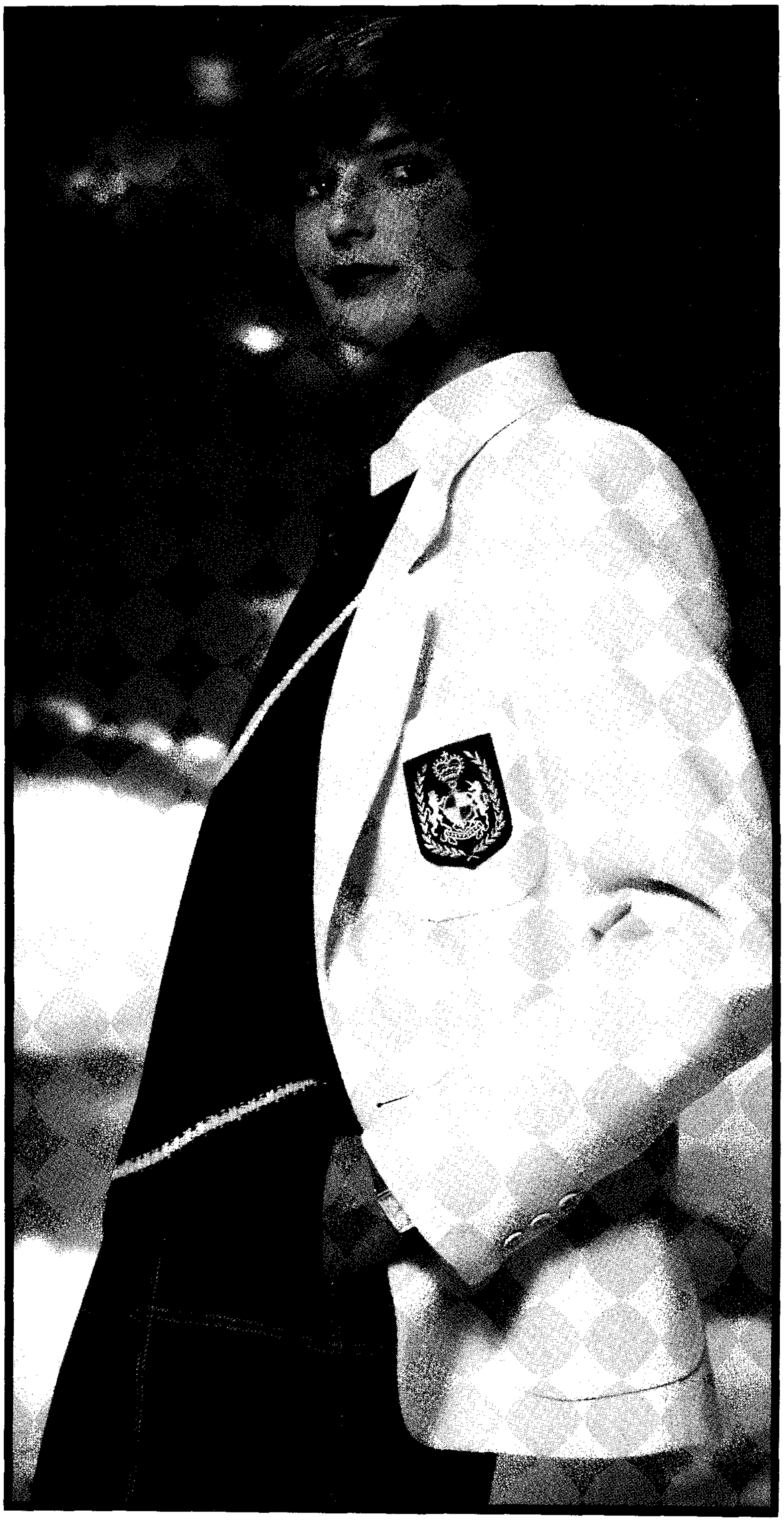
Had he been drinking at home, or had he gone to the pub? I didn't have the social knowledge of London drinking to ask or to guess. I knew nothing about pubs. I didn't like the idea of pubs; I didn't like the idea of a place where people went only to drink. I associated it with the rumshop drunkenness I had seen at home, and was amazed that to ordinary people on the London streets a drunk man was comic, and not hateful. Just as I was slightly amazed now that Mr. Harding, drunk at the lunch table, should be treated by his guests not with contempt but with tolerance, and even respect. He was listened to. I cannot tell what sort of accent he had. It sounded good to me—like something from a film.

The most memorable moment of the lunch came during the telling of a story by Mr. Harding. I have a memory of Angela chuckling while Mr. Harding spoke, and a memory of Mrs. Harding doing a kind of straight-woman act. What Mr. Harding's story was about I do not remember. But there came a moment when he said, slowly, his deliberate, drunken accents filling the room, "One of my wives. Audrey—yes, Audrey." And then he spoke directly to Mrs. Harding. "Do you remember Audrey?" And Mrs. Harding, not laughing, not smiling, not looking directly at Mr. Harding, doing her straight-woman act, said, "I loved Audrey. She was such a sweet kid."

I was dazzled by that passage of dialogue. It seemed to me sophisticated, big-city, like something in a film or play or a book—just the kind of thing I had travelled to London to find, just the kind of material that would help to define me as a writer. And in many of the pieces of writing I attempted—in London at the boarding house, and later in Oxford, during the terms and then the holidays—I brought that passage in. Though I had no social knowledge to set it off; though—to put it at its simplest—I had no idea what Mr. Harding had been doing that morning, where he had come from, and where he would be going that afternoon; though I could hardly see the man or judge his speech; though I never even thought to ask whether he had fought in the war or had spent his time in Earl's Court, drinking.

Writing about Mr. Harding and that passage of dialogue, I had a setting: Sunday lunch in a big London house. In some of the writing I attempted, I improved the condition of everybody. I improved my own condition as well (without overt boasting), because to have heard and recorded that passage made me as "knowing" as I thought a writer should be when he moved among people. So to me, as a writer, that passage gave as much pleasure as it had given to both Mr. Harding and Mrs. Harding.

But what of Mr. Harding? What other clue do I have to a more complete person? Has he really vanished from my memory? Can I not recall more than an impression of middle-aged, baldish whiteness and a lazy, deliberate way of speaking? Did he know that the eighteen-year-old among the guests at his lunch was a writer who would cherish those words of his and go up to his room and write them down? He couldn't have known. The sophistication, then—the play—



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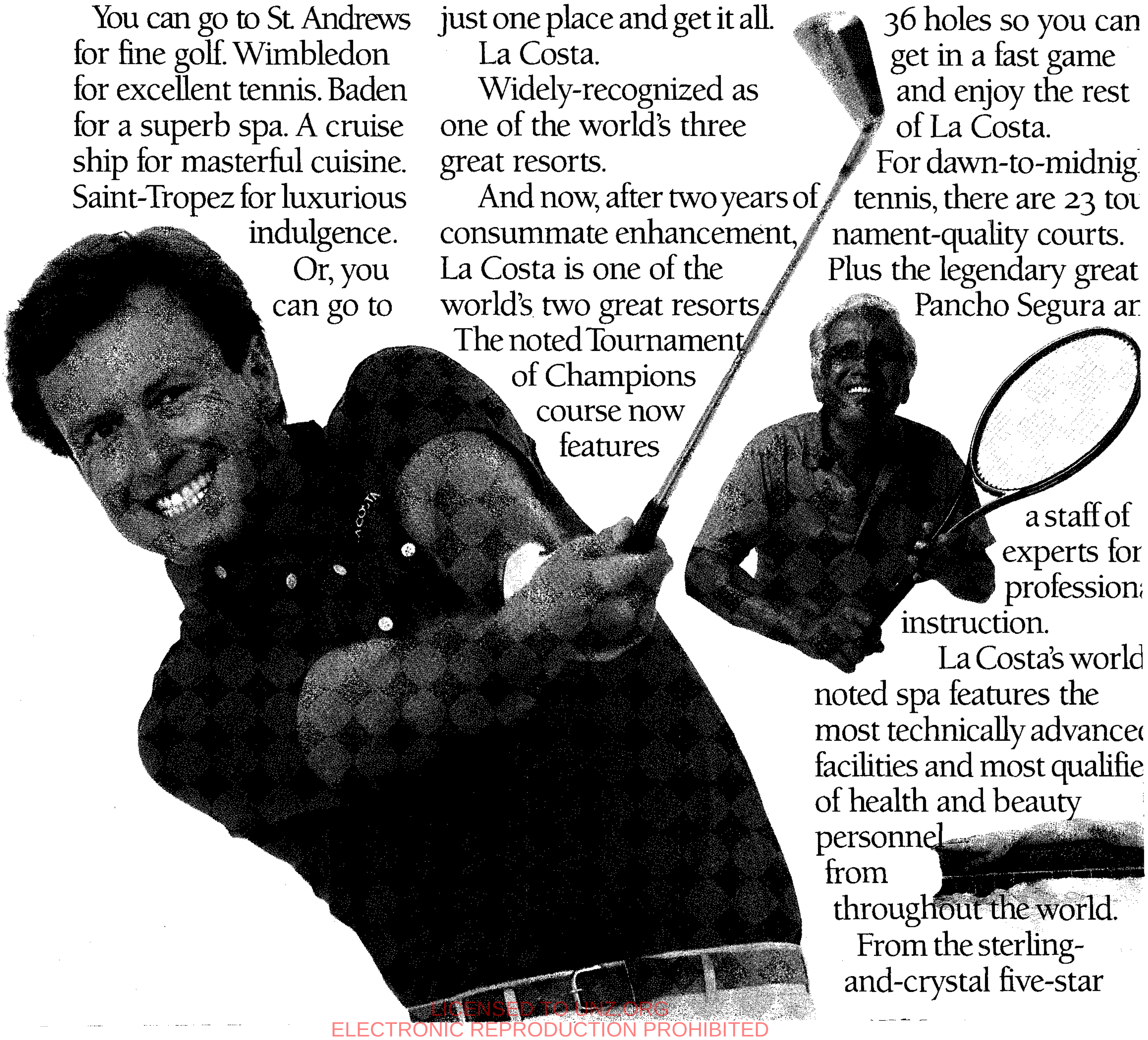

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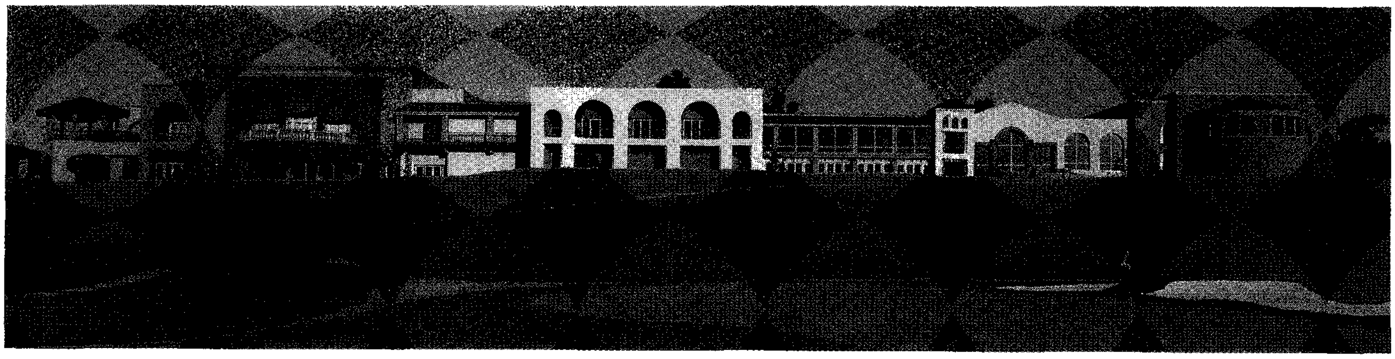

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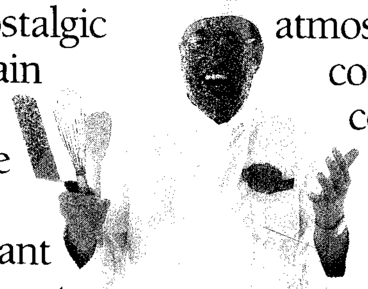

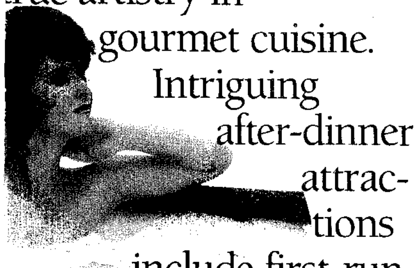

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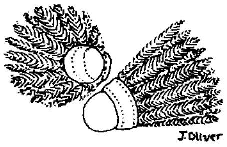
was for the people at the table; it was a thing Mr. Harding could waste. And that little deduction, in retrospect, makes him more interesting than what I noted down about him at the time. My passion to gather metropolitan experience and material, to give myself stature as a writer; this overreadiness to find material that I half knew from other writers already; my very dedication—this got in the way of my noting the truth, which would have been a little clearer to me if my mind had been less cluttered, if I had been a little less well educated.

I see that lunch in the Earl's Court boarding house as slightly less than it seemed to me even at the time. I see the participants as servants, in a degraded setting—the gentlefolks whom the servants were meant to serve being gone, with the war, and leaving a looted house, full of foreigners now. So possibly the deliberation of Mr. Harding's speech was not only the deliberation of the habitual drinker after drinking but also the genteel precision of the servant, whose vowels might have betrayed him to people in the know. But at that lunch Mr. Harding was safe. To his English friends, his sophistication and wit would have been part of a familiar and loved act; and his Englishness worked—wonderfully—for the foreigners present, for both Angela and me.

If Mr. Harding was less than I made him in my writing at the time, he was also more. To make him grand in my writing, equivalent to his wit, I suppressed the boarding-house background. But in suppressing aspects of the truth I did more: I managed to suppress memory. And it was only when I began to concentrate on the lunch that Sunday for this piece that I remembered that the lunch was special. For this reason, which I never mentioned in my writing: it was the Hardings' last lunch in the house; they had been sacked. They were to be replaced by Angela. So about the drinking and the wit and the byplay about "one of my wives," and Mrs. Harding's "I loved Audrey," there was an element of great and admirable bravado. But that was not the material I was looking for; it was not the material I noted.

About Angela, I concentrated, in my writing, on her running away at night from the flat or room of her violent lover, wearing only a fur coat over her nakedness. I knew the fur coat. Its quality I couldn't (and still can't) assess, but it developed for me an alluring sexual quality (as no doubt it had for Angela herself, telling the story of her near-naked night flight). The sexual detail suggested a sexual knowingness; it concealed the innocence of the writer. But I could do little with the material. Unwilling as a writer ever to fabricate, to invent where I had no starting point of knowledge, thinking of it as a kind of trespass, I came to the end of my Angela material very quickly.



As with Mr. Harding, I didn't know where Angela had come from. Her past in London, her life away from the Earl's Court boarding house were mysterious to me. New to London, I couldn't even begin to imagine the furnishings of her lover's room or flat, his family background, his geographical background, far less his conversation. And as mysterious was Angela's time in Italy. There was a story there—if it had occurred to me that there was. And there was a means of finding the story out. I could have asked her. But I never thought of asking her. I hadn't arrived at that stage.

How had she met her lover? What had life been like in Italy during the war? What had happened to other people in her family? And the various Italians and Maltese and Spaniards and Moroccans of European origin who came to her room and were her friends—what were their stories? How had these people found themselves in England and in that Earl's Court area?

The flotsam of Europe not long after the end of the terrible war, in a London house that was now too big for the people it sheltered—that was the true material of the boarding house. But I didn't see it. Perhaps I felt that as a writer I should not ask questions; perhaps I felt that it was enough, or should have been enough, for me as a writer, a sensitive and knowing person, to observe. But there was a subject there that could have been my own—something that would have exercised my indelible pencil to good purpose. Because in 1950 in London I was at the beginning of that great movement of peoples which was to take place in the second half of the twentieth century—a movement and a cultural mixing greater than the peopling of the United States, which was essentially a movement of Europeans to the New World. This was a movement between all the continents. Within ten years, Earl's Court was to lose its prewar or early-war "Hangover Square" associations. It was to become an Australian and South African, white-colonial enclave in London, presaging a greater mingling of peoples. Cities like London were to change. They were to cease being more or less national cities; they were to become cities of the world, modern-day Romes, establishing in the eyes of islanders like me and people even more remote in language and culture the pattern of what great cities should be. They were to be cities visited for learning and elegant goods and manners and freedom by all the barbarian peoples of the globe—people of forest and desert, Arabs, Africans, Malays.

Two weeks away from home, when I thought there was little for me to record as a writer, and just eighteen, I had found, if only I had had the eyes to see, a great subject. Great subjects are illuminated best by small dramas; and in the Earl's Court boarding house, as fellow-guests or as friends of Angela's, there were at least ten or twelve drifters from many countries of Europe and North Africa, who were offering themselves for my inspection —men and women, some of whom had seen terrible things during the war and were now becalmed and quiet in London, solitary, foreign, sometimes idle, sometimes half criminal. These people's principal possessions were their stories, and their stories spilled easily out of them. But I noted nothing down. I asked no questions. I took them all for granted, looked beyond them; and their faces, clothes, names, accents have vanished and cannot now be recalled.

What remained in my memory was what I wrote about obsessively in those early days, and much of that was about Angela's sexuality: the feel of her breasts when, sitting or reclining on the bed beside me in her room, with her back, like mine, against the wall, and the room full of her strange friends, she had allowed me to press my hand against her breast; the shape of her mouth; the brilliant wartime red of her lips; and the feel of her fur coat; and the sight, thrilling and unexpected, of her apron in the restaurant.

The flotsam of Europe after the war —that was one theme I missed. There was another, linked to that. Shortly after she had taken over from the Hardings, Angela took me up to a room one Saturday afternoon to show

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me "something," as she said. She behaved as though this "something" were something she had just discovered, something the deposed Hardings might have been responsible for, though this couldn't have been true: Angela had been connected with the house for some time.

She took me to a room on the second or third floor. It was a big and dark room, much bigger than mine. The curtains were closed. The room smelled of old dirt and urine, old unwashed clothes, old unwashed bodies. It was as though the smell hung on the darkness of the room; as though the darkness were an expression of the smell. There was an old man on the bed; he was the source of the smell. A stick was leaning on the bed. Angela said to the figure on the bed, "I've brought someone to see you."

He paid no attention. Playfully, and greatly to Angela's amusement, he took the stick that was leaning on the bed and tried to raise her skirt with it. She was showing me the old man and his sexual playfulness as an oddity; that was how I accepted it. She told me nothing about him, and I didn't ask. The questions come only now. Had he come to the house before the war, when the lounge might still have been a lounge and the dining room perhaps a true dining room? Had he stayed there throughout the war, and was he too old now to move? Had the Hardings taken up his meals to him, and did Angela do so now? Was he utterly dependent on the people who ran the boarding house?

If, as I thought (though at the age of eighteen I had no means of assessing the age of old people), he was now about eighty, it meant that he was born in 1870. Born in the year Dickens died; the year Lord Alfred Douglas was born; the year of the Franco-Prussian War. Or, to consider it from another angle, the year after Mahatma Gandhi was born. As a young man, he would have known people whose memories went back to the early decades of the nineteenth century; he would have lived among people to whom the Indian Mutiny was a recent affair. Now, after two wasting wars, after Gandhi and Nehru, he was ending his days in one of the big houses of Victorian London, a part of London developed in the Victorian time. And now the houses there, which had survived so much, were too big for the people; and the old man in the big, dark room was like a stranger among the people who lived in the house. Against these houses there beat a new tide of people—like me, and the other Asiatics in the house, and Angela and the other Mediterraneans—who still hardly knew where they were.

I saw the old man once later. He was shuffling about one of the staircase landings. There was an odd, humorous-seeming restlessness about his old face. It may have been that that was the way the flesh and muscles on his face were now set; it was as though his face were, very slightly, twitching with age. He didn't look at me with any kind of recognition; he just had his fixed-seeming smile. He was concentrating on his steps and what for him would have been the long walk down to the hall and the street. It was summer, late August, but he was wearing an overcoat. It was dark blue and looked heavy; it might have been made to measure some time before. He was tall, and the overcoat, though he needed it for warmth, seemed too heavy for his shoulders. He had his stick. His smell preceded him and lingered after him. I suppose he was going out for a little walk; it would have taken him a long time to prepare.

Did he have visitors? Where did he get money? I never asked. And when I went back to the boarding house for the second, and last, time, for the Christmas holidays after my first term at Oxford, I never asked after the old man; and Angela never told me anything about him. I never saw him then; and I suppose that he died in the twelve weeks or so since I had seen him on the landing in his heavy blue overcoat. Such a link with the past, so precious to me, with my feeling for the past. Yet I didn't ask about the old man.

IT wasn't only that I was unformed at the age of eighteen or had no idea what I was going to write about. It was that the idea given me by my education—and by the more "cultural," the nicest, part of that education—was that the writer was a person possessed of sensibility, that the writer was someone who recorded or displayed an inward development. To be that kind of writer (as I interpreted it), I had to be false; I had to pretend to be other than I was, other than what a man of my background could be. Concealing this colonial-Hindu self below the writing personality, I did both my material and myself much damage.

d. ehrenberg

To wish to ask questions, to keep true creative curiosity alive (creative rather than the mindless curiosity of gossip, forgotten about almost as soon as it is received), it was necessary for me to make a pattern of the knowledge I already possessed. That kind of pattern was beyond me in 1950. Because of my ideas about the writer, I took everything I saw for granted. I thought I knew it all already, like a bright student. I thought that as a writer I had only to find out what I had read about and already knew. And very soon—after "Gala Night" and all my many writings about the Hardings and Angela—I had nothing to record and had to stop.

Things—objects—endure. The little pad I had taken aboard the plane at Trinidad—cheap stuff, five-cent-store stuff, cheap ruled paper set in a folder or binder on the inside cover of which were envelopes in a pouch—was still with me, like the indelible pencil. But after the very first day no true excitement had been transmitted to its pages. It recorded smaller things, false things; it recorded nothing; it was put aside. The pencil survived, continued to be used. Writing implements, whether pen or pencil, were not thrown away in those days. And that indelible pencil, which brightened only when water fell on it, grew shorter and stumpier, lasting on long beyond its purely literary duties. It wrote letters; it wrote my name on the front page of the books I bought, books that were many of them like "South Wind"—books that I had read about or that the more cultural of my teachers had recommended to a boy who was going to England to be a writer.

The separation of man from writer that had begun on the long flight from Trinidad to New York became complete. Man and writer both dwindled, the preparations of years seeming to end in futility within a few weeks. And then, but only very slowly, man and writer came together again. It was nearly five years—a year after Oxford was over for me, and long after Angela and Earl's Court passed out of my ken—before I could shed the fantasies given me by my abstract education. Nearly five years before vision was granted me—quite suddenly one day, when I was desperate for such an illumination—of what my material as a writer might be.

I wrote very simply and fast of the simplest things in my memory. I wrote about the street in Port of Spain where I had spent part of my childhood—the street I had intently studied, during those childhood months, from the security and distance of my own family life and house. Knowledge came to me rapidly during the writing. And with that knowledge, that acknowledgment of myself (so hard before it was done, so very easy and obvious afterward), my curiosity grew fast. I did other work; and in this concrete way, out of work that came easily to me because it was so close to me, I defined myself, and saw that my subject was not my sensibility, my inward development, but the worlds I contained within myself, the worlds I lived in: my subject turning out to be a version of the one that, unknown to me, I had stumbled upon two weeks after I left home and found myself in the Earl's Court boarding house among the flotsam of Europe after the war.

Until that illumination, I didn't know what kind of person I was as man and writer—and both were really the same. Put it at its simplest: Was I funny or was I serious? So many tones of voice were possible or assumable, so many attitudes to the same material. Out of a great mental fog there had come to me the idea of the street. And all at once, within a matter of days, material and tone of voice and writing skill had locked together and begun to develop together.

I came in time to the end of that first inspiration. And in 1956, six years after leaving home, I could go back. Six years! That was the time scale ship travel imposed on people. To go abroad was indeed to say goodbye. Six years in England!

Travel was now to become more frequent for me, journeys more matter-of-fact. Yet every journey home and every journey back to England was to qualify the one that had gone before, one response overlaying the other. I went back in 1956 by steamship, travelling directly from England: experiencing the slow change in weather, noting with pleasant surprise the day when the wind began to blow and it was not necessary to brace oneself, because the wind was mild and warm; experiencing the ritual of shipboard life, the extravagant printed menus, the officers changing from temperate black uniforms to warm-weather white uniforms. After thirteen days on the Atlantic, I awakened one morning to silence; after thirteen days and nights of the steamer's engines, the silence was something that filled the ears.

We were at Barbados; and every porthole of my cabin framed a bright, shocking, beautiful picture—blue sky, white clouds, green vegetation. So that, at this first landfall on my first journey back home, I was momentarily like a tourist, seeing the publicized, expected thing. This was the way that as a child I had been taught to draw and color my island; it was the way the mulatto curio-makers of Frederick Street and Marine Square in Port of Spain, the people with stalls on the pavements below the overhanging upper floors of the old buildings, painted the local scene for the visitors who got off the tourist ships of the Moore-McCormack line and walked about the town for an hour or so.

I hadn't believed in that way of seeing. I had thought that it was a convention, something for the posters, the advertisements in the American magazines. And, indeed, the island that revealed itself to me when a party of us went ashore had no relation to those beautiful porthole pictures. The island of Barbados was flat; it looked worn out, by sugarcane fields and by people; the roads were narrow; the wooden houses were small, very small, and seemed to sit lightly on the flat land, to be insubstantial, though this island had been cultivated and peopled for centuries; and there were little children everywhere.

The children were black. There was not in Barbados that mixture of races we had in Trinidad; and, especially, there was not in Barbados an Indian or Asiatic population. But after my six years in England to come upon Barbados like this, suddenly, after thirteen days at sea, was less like coming upon a landscape than like seeing very clearly an aspect of myself and a past I thought I had outlived. The smallness of that past, the shame of that smallness: they had not been

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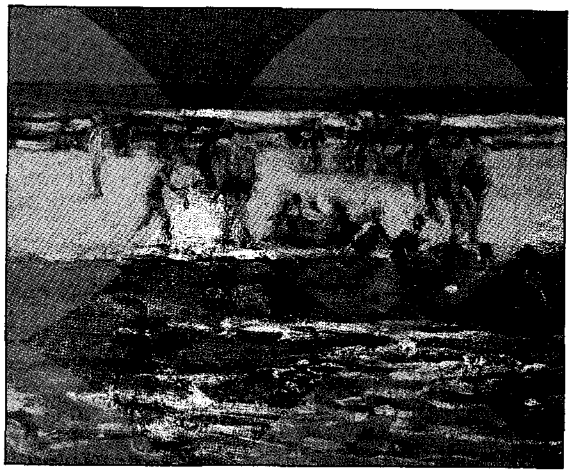

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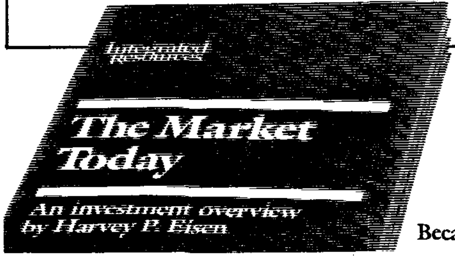

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things I could easily acknowledge as a writer. I was glad when the morning tour (in a shared taxi) was over and I could get back to the ship.

As though there were safety in the ship; as though the next morning the ship were not to set me down at my own island. And I found, when I landed there, that everything had shrunk to Barbados size. But, much more than in Barbados, I was looking less at a landscape than at old, personal pain. Six years before—and at that age six adult years was half a life—everything in Port of Spain had been tinged with the glory of my goodbye to it: the cambered streets, the wooden houses, the big-leaved trees, the low shops, the constant view of the hills of the Northern Range in morning light and afternoon light. Everything had been tinged with the excitement of departure and the long journey to famous places—New York, Southampton, London, Oxford. Everything had been tinged with the promise and the fantasies of the writing career and the metropolitan life. Now, six years later, the world I thought I had left behind was waiting for me. It had shrunk, and I felt I had shrunk with it.

I had made a start as a writer. But neither of the two novels I had written had as yet been published; and I couldn't see my way ahead, couldn't see other books. Six years before, I had been only a boy, following a fantasy, answerable to no one. Now my father had died; there were debts; there were family responsibilities. But I had no means of helping anyone; I could barely help myself. I had only a newly discovered talent; and the only thing I could do, the only way I could look after myself, was to be in England—no longer now a country of fantasy but simply a place where as a writer I might make a living in a small way, from radio scripts and bits of journalism, while I waited for the books to come.

I left after six weeks. The scholarship that had taken me to England in 1950 had given me the return fare; this second trip to England was paid for by me, with precious money from my very small store. I left on a banana boat, which went by way of Jamaica. I left the ship at Kingston and joined it again three days later at Port Antonio, where it was loading up with bananas: a memory of a green coastline, of dark-green vegetation as in a lagoon overhanging a dark-green sea, and an ache in my heart at my own insecurity and my consequent inability to enjoy the landscape. And then the ship took me north, to the shortening days of England in winter.

The winter itself, the gray, tossing seas, I didn't mind on that nearly empty ship. Winter, in fact, I still liked, for the drama, for the contrast with the tropics of my childhood. It was the uncertainty at the other end that bothered me, and the knowledge now that at either end of my own "run" there was uncertainty. No scholarship money; no vague, warm idea of Oxford and writing at the end of the journey; no note-taking. No Angela and Earl's Court boarding house; no sense of the big-city center, with the noise of the Underground trains. Instead of Earl's Court and its old, Victorian grandeur, there was a working-class Kilburn house of gray, almost black, brick, in which I had a two-room flat, sharing lavatory and bathroom with everybody else.

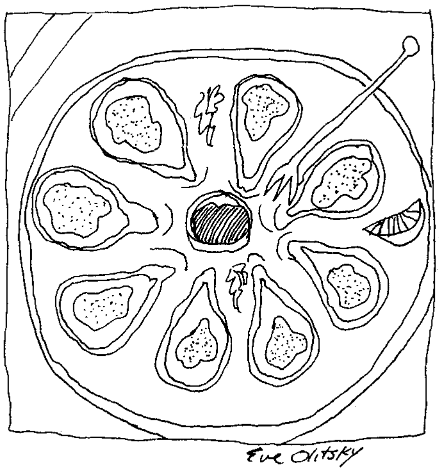
There was an English brewer on the ship, a tall, heavy elderly man. I knew he was a brewer because I heard him say it to someone. I also heard him give his name and his title to the purser when he took a book from the small banana-boat library—give his title, although there were so few of us on the ship: he, the brewer; three or four English ladies; a Jamaican mulatto; and I. The ladies played cards together.

Six years before, the brewer and these ladies would have been very closely studied by me. Not now. It wasn't that they were alien, and too far from my experience; it was that, having arrived at some intimation of my subjects as a writer, I was no longer interested in English people purely as English people, no longer looking for confirmation of what I had read in books and what in 1950 I would have considered metropolitan material. One of the ladies ran a boarding house on the south coast of England. She had given herself a *Caribbean cruise*. I heard the words in her conversation, saw them in her eyes, could hear them in reports she would make to her friends when she got back: the experience itself seemed to matter less than the report she would make of it. What different values the words had for her and for me!

FOUR years later, it had all changed for me: the world, my mood, my vision, that very Atlantic. In those four years, out of the panic of that winter return to England, I had pulled much work out of myself, had written a book that I felt to be important. And it was with a security that was entirely new—the security of a man who had at last made himself what he had wanted to be—that I went back to the island ten years after I left it for the first time.

And everything I saw and felt and experienced then was tinged with celebration: the hills, the spreading shacks, the heat, the radio programs, the radio commercials, the noise, the route taxis. The landscape, with all its colonial or holiday motifs—beaches, market women, coconut trees, banana trees, sun, big-leaved trees—had always, since I had known it, been the landscape of anxiety, even panic, and of sacrifice. The education that had made me had always been like a competition, a race, in which the fear of failure was like the fear of extinction. I had never, as a child, felt free. On afternoons like these, where now, in 1960, I could go for drives or dawdle over lunch, I had had to stay with the books; on nights like these, when now I could go visiting or could simply talk, I had had as a scholarship boy to study or memorize things to a late hour. My abstract learning had been dearly bought!

If there was a place at this stage of my career where I could fittingly celebrate my freedom—the fact that I had made myself a writer and could now live as a writer—it was here, on this island that had fed my panic and my ambition, and nurtured my earliest fantasies. And, just as in 1956, at that first return, I had moved from place to place to see it shrink from the place I had known in my childhood and adolescence, so now I moved from place to place to touch it with my mood of celebration, to remove from it the terror I had felt in these places for various reasons at different times. Far away, in England, I had re-created this landscape in my books. The landscape of the books was not as accurate or full as I had pretended it was, but now I cherished the original because of that act of creation.



And it was as if then, when I had won through to a particular kind of achievement and had come to the end of a particular kind of fear, my relationship with my island had come to an end. Because after this I never found in myself any particular wish to go back. When for one reason or another I did go back, I found that my interest in the island was satisfied, even sated, in a day. I might on the way from the airport on the morning of an arrival be struck by the colors, and think I would like to stay for many days or weeks. But after the first day and first night and the first jet-lagged predawn rising, and the first sight of the hummingbirds in the garden, I would become restless, anxious to move on.

People had no news; they revealed themselves quickly. Their racial obsessions, which once could tug at my heart, made them simple people. Part of the fear of extinction which I had developed as a child had to do with this: the fear of being swallowed up or extinguished by the simplicity of one side or the other, my side or the side that wasn't mine.

It was odd: the place itself, the little island and its people, could no longer hold me. But the island—with the curiosity it awakened in me about the larger world, the idea of civilization, and the idea of antiquity, and all the anxieties it had quickened in me—had given me the world as a writer; had given me the themes that in the second half of the twentieth century had become important; had made me metropolitan, but in a way quite different from my first understanding of the word.

When, in 1960, with that mood of writer's celebration on me, I began my first travel book, it was from my little colonial island that I started, psychologically and physically. The book was in the nature of a commission: I was to travel through colonies, fragments of still surviving empires, in the Caribbean and the Guianas of South America. I knew, and was beglamoured by, the idea of the metropolitan traveller, the man starting from Europe. It was the only kind of model I had, but, as a colonial among colonials who were very close to me, I could not be that kind of traveller, even though I might share that traveller's education and culture and have his feeling for adventure. Especially, I was aware of not having a metropolitan audience to "report back" to. The fight between my idea of the glamour of the traveller-writer and the rawness of my nerves as a colonial travelling among colonials made for difficult writing. When, the travelling done, I went back to London, with my notes and diaries, to do the writing, the problems were not resolved. I took refuge in humor—comedy, funniness, the satirical reflex—which in writing, as in life, is so often a covering up for confusion.

In order to do more of this kind of writing, it was necessary for me to acknowledge more of myself. I soon had the opportunity. Not long after finishing that first travel book, I went to India, to do another. In travelling to India, I was travelling to an un-English fantasy, and a fantasy unknown to Indians of India: I was travelling to the peasant India that my Indian grandfathers had sought to re-create in Trinidad, the "India" I had partly grown up in, the India that was like a loose end in my mind, where our past suddenly stopped. There was no model for me here; neither Forster nor Ackerley nor Kipling could help. To get anywhere in the writing, I had first of all to define myself very clearly to myself.

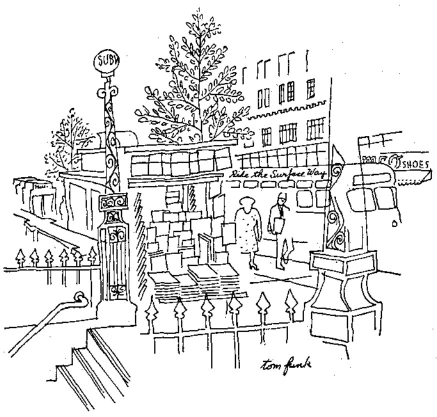
So, from the starting point of Trinidad, my knowledge and self-knowledge grew: the street in Port of Spain where I had spent part of my childhood; a reconstruction of my "Indian" family life in Trinidad; a journey to Caribbean and South American colonies; a later journey to the special ancestral land of India. My curiosity spread in all directions. Every exploration, every book added to my knowledge, qualified my earlier idea of myself and the world.

But Trinidad itself, the starting point, the center—it could no longer hold me.

Then I accepted a commission from an American publisher to write a book for a series on cities. I chose my own city, Port of Spain, to write about, because I thought it would be easy for me and also because I thought there was little to write about: Trinidad, after its discovery and dispeopling, had not been peopled again or settled until the end of the eighteenth century. I thought of the project as the labor of a few months, journalism in hard covers. Then I discovered that the source books didn't really exist. The idea that historical truth is preserved somewhere in libraries, in semi-divine volumes, with semi-divine guardians, is something that many of us have, I suppose. But books are physical objects, created or manufactured to meet a demand; and there were no such semi-divine source volumes about Trinidad. I had to go to the documents themselves. Such an irritation. But then the documents began to draw me in, and the longer I stayed with them the harder it was to give up the project.

The idea behind the book, the narrative line, was to attach the island, the little place in the mouth of the Orinoco River, to great names and great events: Columbus; the search for El Dorado; Sir Walter Raleigh. Two hundred years after that, the growth of the slave plantations. And then the revolutions—the American revolution; the French revolution and its Caribbean by-product, the black Haitian revolution; the South American revolution, and the great names of that revolution: Francisco Miranda, Bolívar. At the end of the period of my story, Trinidad, detached from South America and Venezuela and the Spanish Empire, was a full British West Indian colony, an island of sugar and slaves (the aboriginal population extinct, forgotten). And then, within years, slavery was to be abolished; sugar was to cease to be of value; and this little corner of the New World, all ideas of its promise now abandoned, was to sink into its long nineteenth-century colonial torpor. While revolutionary Venezuela, no longer part of the Spanish Empire, was beginning its century of chaos.

I could see in the documents of this later period the lineaments of the world I had grown up in. Asian-Indian immigrants had come in the period of nineteenth-century torpor. As a schoolboy, I had assumed that torpor to be a constant—something connected with the geographical location of the island, the climate, the quality of the light. It had never occurred to me that the drabness I knew was man-made, that it had causes, that there had been other visions and, indeed, other landscapes there.



Reading the transcript (miraculously preserved) of the trial of a Negro slave for the murder of another slave in Port of Spain in the Spanish time, and picking up inconsequential details about the houses, the street life, the back-yard or slave-yard love affairs and jealousies, I found I could easily think myself back into that Port of Spain street of two hundred years before. I could see the people, hear the speech and accents. In that street I could see the origin of the Port of Spain street I had spent part of my childhood in—the street whose life and people had been the subject of my first book.

Just as at the moment of takeoff in 1950, in the Pan American World Airways plane, I had been amazed by the brown-and-green pattern of fields which gave my island the appearance of other places photographed from the air, so now I was amazed, reading the documents of my island in London, by the antiquity of the place to which I belonged. Such simple things! Seeing the island as part of the globe, seeing it sharing in the antiquity of the earth! Yet these simple things came to me as revelations, so used had I been in Trinidad to roadside views, to seeing the agricultural colony at ground level, as it were, at the end of the Great Depression and the century-long colonial torpor. The landscape in my mind's eye during the writing of this book became quite different in its feel and associations from the landscape of the earlier books.

The labor, which at the beginning I had thought of as the labor of six months, stretched to two years. Ever since I began to identify my subjects, I had hoped to arrive, in a book, at a synthesis of the worlds and cultures that made me. The other way of writing, the separation of one world from the other, was easier, but I felt it false to the nature of my experience. I felt that in this history I had made such a synthesis. But it tired me. And many months before finishing this book I thought I would put an end to my time in England; shed weariness, not only the weariness of the writing but also the weariness of being in England, the rawness of my nerves as a foreigner, the weariness of my insecurity, social, racial, financial; put an end to the distortion of my personality which had begun on the very day I left home; put an end to that journey which in spite of the returns and the other journeys in the interim had remained the fracturing one that began that day when the Pan American plane, taking me up a few thousand feet above the island where I had lived all my life, showed me a pattern of fields and colors I had never seen before.

I SOLD my house. A few weeks' writing remained, and in the house to which I moved I began to feel very tired. I used to have two baths a day. The first bath was after breakfast, to wash away the effects of the sleeping pill that had kept my mind quiet during the night, had stopped me from dealing in words, solving the problems of various parts of my book—had stopped me from seeing all these problems come together into one unsolvable and alarming threat. (In daylight, I knew that writing problems were solved one by one.) The second bath I had at the end of the day's work. So morning and evening for ten or fifteen minutes at a time I soaked in warm water. One morning, the idea came to me that I was like a corpse at the bottom of a river or stream, tossing in the current. I gave up the morning soak. But the idea of the corpse was hard to get rid of. It came back to me every time I had a bath.

At last, the book was handed in, and I could leave England. I had no long-term plans. I could think ahead only to the freedom—the freedom of not having a book to write anymore, the freedom to spend each day as I chose, the freedom to move from place to place, to say goodbye. I intended to be a roamer for a while, to live the hotel life. I intended also—at last—to spend a little time in the United States. Before that, there was some journalism to do: pieces on the Caribbean islands of St. Kitts and Anguilla, then in the news; and a piece on Belize, British Honduras—my first piece on Central America.

I went first of all to my own island, Trinidad. I wanted to see the island where I had been living in a new way in my imagination for the last two years, the island I had restored, as it were, to the globe and for which now I felt a deep romance. I found an island full of racial tensions, and close to revolution. So as soon as I had arrived at a new idea about the place it had ceased to be mine.

Through writing—knowledge and curiosity feeding off one another—I had arrived at a new idea of myself and my world. But the world had not stood still. In 1950, in London, in the boarding house, I had found myself at the beginning of a great movement of peoples after the war, a great shaking up of the world, a great shaking up of old cultures and old ideas. And, just as my own journey had brought about a change in me and set me looking for new ideas and a resolution beyond anything I had imagined as a bright schoolboy at Queen's Royal College in Port of Spain, so restlessness and the need for a new idea of the self had driven many other people, including the people I thought I had, in every sense of the word, left behind.

The muscular, weight-lifting Trinidad Negro in the tight, buttoned-up sports jacket in Puerto Rico, on the way to Harlem; the other black man, on the S.S. Columbia, handling himself carefully, returning to the life in Germany he preferred to his life in the United States—these men, in whom (unwillingly, since I was Indian and Hindu, full of the tragedy and glory of India) I saw aspects of

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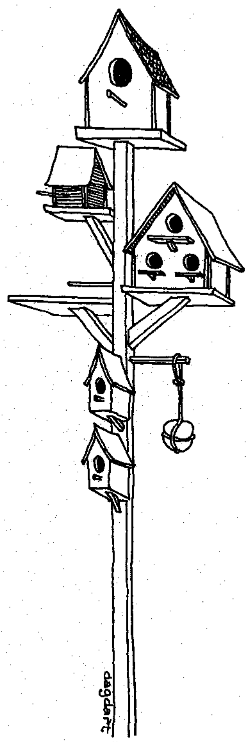
myself, echoes of my own journey and the yearning at the back of that journey, had been isolated in 1950, vulnerable, their nerves raw. There had since been many more like them. They hadn't all travelled to find fulfillment—or to be abraded. In Trinidad, on my return now, that rawness of nerves among black people had become like a communal festering. It couldn't be ignored. And so to return to my island in the Orinoco after the twenty years of writing that had taken me to a romantic vision of the place was to return to a place that was no longer mine in the way it had been mine when I was a child, when I never thought whether it was mine or not.



That romance was now a private possession. The island meant other things to other people. The Negro in the hangar and the man on the Columbia had asserted propriety, their wish to live within an old order, their wish to be treated as others were. Twenty years later, the Negroes of Trinidad, following those of the United States, were asserting their separateness. They simplified and sentimentalized the past; they did not, like me, wish to possess it for its romance. They wore their hair in a new way. The hair that had with them been a source of embarrassment and shame, a servile badge, they now wore as a symbol of aggression.

To keep my idea of romance, I had—as before in Trinidad, but now in a new way—to look selectively. I had to ignore almost everything that leaped out at the eye, and almost everything in the vegetation I had been trained to see as tropical and local, part of our travel-poster beauty—coconut, sugarcane, bamboo, mango, bougainvillea, poinsettia—since all those plants and trees had been imported with the settlement and the plantations. The landscape of the past existed only in fragments. To see one such fragment, I looked at the drying-up mangrove swamp—green, thick leaves, black roots, black mud—outside Port of Spain, ignoring the rubbish-strewn highway and the bent and battered median rail, and the burning rubbish dump, and the dust-blown shack settlement beyond the highway, and the shacks on the hills of the Northern Range. From the top of Laventille Hill, among the shacks, I could imagine myself at the beginning of things if I looked selectively down at the Gulf of Paria—gray, leaden, never blue—and the islets in the gulf.

My vision of the island's history was not the vision that set the young black people marching in the streets and threatening another false revolution. The story had not stopped where my book stopped; the story was going on. Two hundred years on, another Haiti was preparing, I thought: a wish to destroy a world judged corrupt and too full of pain—to turn one's back on it, rather than to improve it. After the book I had written, after my two years' exaltation, I saw this anger from two sides: from the side of the Negroes, the people with the hair, and also from the side of the Asian-Indian community, the people mainly threatened—not black, not white.

I went on after a fortnight to St. Kitts and Anguilla, to do my articles. St. Kitts was very small—thirty thousand people. It had no Asian-Indian population and therefore, for me, no personal complication. To the Negroes there, I was just a stranger, someone not black, and with straight hair. Judgments could be as simple as that there. This absence of personal complication, the smallness, and the simplicity of the geography made the past extraordinarily graphic. St. Kitts was the earliest British colony in the Caribbean, established in a region from which Spain had withdrawn. In shape it was—apart from a tail—round. It had a central mountain, forested at the top, and the slopes, covered with even sugarcane, ran all the way down to the sea. The island was edged with a narrow asphalt road, and along this road were the little houses of the workers, descendants of slaves. Sugar and slavery had created that simplicity, that unnaturalness in the vegetation and landscape.

In a dry shallow ford not far from this littoral road, there were boulders in the sugarcane. These boulders were incised with very rough figures: aboriginal-Indian work—the earliest past, a reminder of the horror before slavery. No aboriginal Indians now existed in St. Kitts; they had been killed off three hundred years before by English and French, and the rough carvings on those boulders were the only memorials the Indians had left. The accessible past was the English church and churchyard—in a tropical setting. No yews; instead, the palms known as royal palms, with straight and stout gray trunks, with grainy ridges all the way up, like healed wounds, each ridge marking the place where a frond had grown. (And how different, in this colonial setting, were the associations of an English churchyard from the associations of a churchyard in England!) The past was also accessible in the little town's eighteenth-century main square, called Pall Mall, where newly arrived slaves from Africa had been put up for sale after being rested in the barracoons. For a hundred and fifty years in St. Kitts, the memory of this past had lain dormant. Now, in mimicry of Trinidad and the United States and other places, the memory revived, when the memory had really ceased to humiliate—serving instead as a political stimulus, a communal rhetoric of sentimentality and anger.

And on the island of Anguilla, even smaller than St. Kitts, not green, less productive, there was another aspect of that three-hundred-year-old slave simplicity. The people of Anguilla were not pure black; they had their own past; they were separated by that past from the people of St. Kitts. The population of Anguilla—there were about six thousand people in all—was made up of a few mulatto clans with British names. They had the vaguest idea of their history, of how they had got to that flat barrenness in the Caribbean Sea, so far from the big continents, so far, even, from the other islands. Some people spoke of a shipwreck.

I saw all this under the spell of the book I had written, the past I had discovered, far away in England, from the documents and felt I had almost created, as much as my novels had been created. And, still under that spell, I went on to Belize. To do that, I had to go to Jamaica first; from Jamaica there was one airplane a week. It stopped at Guatemala City. In the dark airport building—beyond the jagged, mud-colored volcano craters (like giant anthills or like the extravagant towers of a fairy tale), on the level surfaces of which houses clung in clusters—when I saw the faces of the short, plump girls behind the counter and saw the fresh-vegetable and fresh-pepper relishes in the glass case, I remembered that this was absolutely my first time in Central America, my first time in the land laid waste by Cortés and his successors. The girls were Chinese-looking, but they were not Chinese. That half familiarity made them very strange, remote. And those chopped-up-vegetable relishes in the glass case—they suggested a matching strangeness. Foods distinguish cultures, and even historical epochs. (What would the food of ancient Rome have been like?) And I remembered reading somewhere that the chocolate drink consumed by the jar in Montezuma's court was drunk cold and bitter and spiced.

In the glimpse of the strange food; in the strange, Chinese but not Chinese faces of the girls behind the counter; in the Spanish but not Spanish of the menu boards; in the fairy-tale volcanic spires of the land outside; in the vegetables and flowers that grew unnaturally large and bright in the high, clear, temperate air, I had an intimation of the wonder of the New World and the tragedy and pathos of the Spanish usurpation.

It was a short flight on to Belize City. Belize, British Honduras: the British intrusion on the coast of the Spanish Empire—the British mahogany colony and the source of much of the Georgian furniture in the London salesrooms. (But there was no mahogany in Belize now; it had all been cut down.) On the coast, there would have been among the Negroes descendants of the slave mahogany-log cutters. Inland, there was a Mayan population, and there were mighty Mayan ruins. In the shadow of one such ruin, a Mayan boy (whatever his private emotions) giggled when I tried to talk to him about the monument. He giggled and covered his mouth; he seemed to be embarrassed. He was like a person asking to be forgiven for the absurdities of long ago—though there was no British colonial architecture worth the name in the mahogany colony, and all the monuments were Mayan. To the north, near the Mexican border, and still barely excavated, there was a whole Mayan town, abandoned centuries before the coming of the Spaniards and now covered by forest, every tall, steep-stepped temple making a green hill.

From London to Trinidad, St. Kitts and Anguilla, Guatemala City and Belize: the journey might have been planned by a man wishing to move backward in time, to see his history take concrete expression. So for many weeks after finishing my book I continued to exist in its aura and exaltation, finding confirmation of the world I had dreamed about and created from the documents. I had given myself a past, and a romance of the past. One of the loose ends in my mind had vanished: a little chasm filled. And though something like Haitian anarchy seemed to threaten my little island, and though physically I no longer belonged to the place, yet the romance by which I had attached it to the rest of the world continued to be possessed by me as much as the imaginative worlds of my other, fictional books.

Still, there was no word from publisher or agent in the United States about the book I had just written. The time came when I had to move on. I stuck to my original plan, which was to go to the United States and travel there for a while, using the advance I hoped to get from the book. I left from Jamaica. It was February. The weather was bad in the north. The plane, just after it crossed Jamaica, landed at Montego Bay. We stayed there for many hours. A hotel lunch was served by sulky, aggressive Negro waiters who had got too used to waiting on tourists and despised them. In the late afternoon, we took off again, and the airplane flew and flew into the night and then it flew around in the night. We flew for hours. We flew until our fuel was exhausted, and then we landed at Baltimore to take on more fuel. Passengers were not allowed to get off. We took off again and flew some more. Like hijacked passengers. It was like the slow, slow flight of nineteen years before, in the little plane of Pan American World Airways (a flight that had set me making notes in my cheap pad every hour). Now we were flying around unable to land because of the weather, the snow. So we flew until we could land. We landed, finally, some hours after midnight.

No coins; no knowledge of the different sounds made by American telephones. And, landing in that great cold, I found the next day or that day that my book had been judged unsuitable by the publisher who had commissioned it, that the decision had

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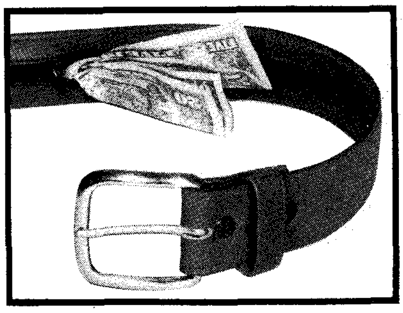

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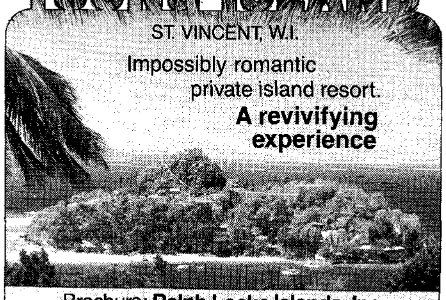

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been made weeks before, while on my journalistic travels I was being uplifted by my own vision of romance, the product of the writing, coming at the end of a vocation that had lasted twenty years.

I had been briefly in New York twice since 1950, the year of my overnight stay. But the city I saw on those later occasions had remained quite separate from the first city, the city of Raimu and "Marius" and "South Wind" and the gray, seemingly canopied sky. It was only now, in a time of anxiety that was like the anxiety of my first arrival, that I thought to look for that city. It was only now that I could begin to acknowledge the humiliation the taxi-driver had caused me when he cheated me, the humiliation I had felt at not being able to tip the Negro in the hotel.

I remembered the name of the hotel: the Wellington. I remembered its writing paper, on which for the sake of drama I had written my diary on the night of my arrival. On this writing paper, the letters that spelled out the name of the hotel sloped backward, next to a drawing of what I supposed was the hotel building. Did the hotel still exist? My friend Robert Silvers, who had run my articles on St. Kitts and Anguilla in his paper, the *New York Review of Books*, said, "It's a hotel where musicians stay."

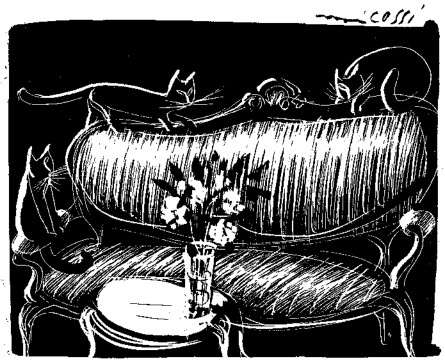
And yet it was astonishing to me to come upon it one day, a working hotel on a busy street. It should have been an archeological site, to match its mythical nature in my mind. So modest at pavement level, in spite of the drawing of the skyscraper on the writing paper. Door, lobby—none of these things I had remembered. The hotel had lived in my imagination, rather than memory, like something from earliest childhood. An impression of darkness all around—I had arrived early in the morning, and had been very tired, and nervous. And, within that darkness, sensations rather than pictures: eating the chicken over the wastepaper basket, avoiding the scalding water in the shower cubicle. Like dreams rather than memories, and yet suited to the occasion for me: for on that day space and time had become one. Both space and time separated me from my past at the end of that day; and the writer's journey that began that day had not ended.

There was no advance, but I stuck to my plan. I spent my own money. It was like watching myself bleed. Eventually, I moved away, west. And in Victoria, British Columbia, in a brand-new rented flat with rented furniture, I started work again. The writer's life: whatever one's mood, it was always necessary to pick oneself up and start again.

I started on a sequence about freedom and loss. The idea had come to me more than three years before, in East Africa. It had come suddenly, during the afternoon of a daylong drive between Nairobi, in Kenya, and Kampala, in Uganda. It had come as a mischievous, comic idea, matching the landscape and exhilaration of the long drives I had been used to making in that part of Africa. Now the idea was all that I had at the moment in the way of writer's capital, and it was touched with the mood of the historical book I had written; my disappointment; and the homelessness, the drifting about, I had imposed on myself. I had, as it were (and as had happened often before), become one of my own characters.

After some weeks, I came to the end of my original impulse, and could go no farther with the writing. I lost faith in what I was doing. The days in Victoria, which had passed easily when I was writing, began to drag. And then I faced the simple fact that as a man who made his living by writing in English and had no American audience I had only England to go back to; that my wish to be free of the English heaviness had failed; that my departure from my island in 1950—with all that it implied of homelessness and drift and longing—was final.

From Victoria to Vancouver: the very tall stewardesses in the very short skirts—a dreadful frivolity. Toronto, London: the grind and grind of the airplane engines, hour after hour—stages in a return I didn't want. So twenty years on I was making a journey that mimicked my first. If twenty years before I could have been granted a glimpse of myself as a writer, someone with a talent that had been developed, and with books to his name, I would have considered myself blessed. The blessing I felt as a blessing still; but—as with the pain that attends love—the disappointment that had come with the blessing I felt as a terrible solitude.



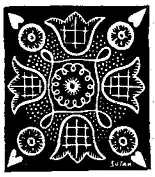
I HAD no house. In London, I rented a service flat in Dolphin Square. It consumed my money in steady installments, every week so much. The bills came up in a woman's handwriting: round, easy, the lower line of the writing creating a regular, almost scalloped pattern. The handwriting spoke of a woman absolutely at peace, sexually fulfilled, without anxiety. I envied her this calm, this absence of ambition. And when I went down to the office to settle the bill I tried to work out which of the women it was, among the clerks who might have passed as wage slaves—which woman it was who, perhaps without knowing how blessed she was, had written out the figures of the fierce, debilitating demand.

The summer was over. For the first time in England, after nearly twenty years, I felt cold, imperfectly clad. Until this time, I had had the same kind of clothes summer and winter and had not felt the need for a pullover or for warm underclothes, or even for an overcoat. I had longed for frosty weather, short days, electric lights in the early afternoon. Now, with this need for warm clothes, a need that seemed to grow and grow, I felt the winter as winter, darkness.

One day, there were workmen somewhere below my window. They began to talk to one another. It was like listening to a play: different voices, careful dialogue, characters, sentences, ideas—showing off, acting, style. In all my time in England, I had never heard workmen talk like that, among themselves, so loudly, in the open air, for so long. It was a little frightening, this eavesdropping on what was like an unknown country. I knew another side of England: Oxford, people in broadcasting, writers. I had never been brought into contact like this with the country I had been living in for so long. I hadn't read about workingmen like the ones I was now listening to; I hadn't seen films about them.

I went eventually to stay in a private house in the town of Gloucester. It was a wet day. The railway station was cold, damp, indicating the nearness of the River Severn. Gloucester, away from its grand cathedral, was a small, mean, common town. It was not a place I would have gone to out of choice. But now it offered a house, shelter, hospitality.

The house was at the edge of the town, where mean houses made mean the fields they had been set down among: the pollarded willows, the narrow, tainted brooks, in which industrial litter floated—willows and brooks like features of a city slum. It was not a house I would have chosen. But it was a home for someone and had been furnished like that and had the atmosphere. It was welcoming.



At lunchtime on this first day, the house also offered a coal fire. French windows looked out onto a long, narrow garden, scrupulously stripped and forked over for the winter. Far off were the sounds of a railway marshalling yard—oddly comforting at this distance. Everything about this house was welcoming and good. And in this unambitious setting I felt protected, isolated, far from every wounding thing I had known. For the first time in many weeks, I felt at ease.

That afternoon, in the front room of the house, where the furniture was old but cared for, I looked for the first time in weeks at the typescript of the book I had tried to get started on in Victoria, the sequence about freedom and loss. I found it better than I had during the writing. I even saw the sentence where it had come alive—a sentence written out of concentration, from within the mood created by the words. That critical creative moment had been missed by me in Victoria, perhaps because of my anxiety about what was to follow in the writing, and perhaps, as well, because of my anxiety about what was to follow Victoria.

Now, recognizing the validity of that good sentence, I surrendered to the pictures the words created, the other pictures that trailed them. I summoned up again, and sank back into, the mood of Africa, the mood out of which the sentence had been written. I heard—or created—snatches of dialogue from different stages of my story; this particular sequence in the story was full of dialogue. I made brief notes. And it was only when I came back from the mood or came out of the concentration that I understood how far away I had been.

In my early days as a writer, when my talent was declaring itself, I had developed (or discovered) this ability to concentrate and to compose in the midst of harassment (given a clear run of an hour or two: shorter periods didn't work), which was an ability suddenly to withdraw; to shed even acute anxiety, like an engine cutting out when too much is asked of it; to push the world to one side and to enter my writing as I might enter a walled garden or enclosure (the image that often came to my mind). Writing strengthened me; it quelled anxiety. And now writing restored me again. My book was given back to me. I began to write slowly, day by day.

The book of the summer was given back to me in the winter. Without the book and the daily act of creation, I do not know how I would have gone through that difficult time. With me, everything started from writing. Writing had brought me to England, had sent me away from England; had given me a vision of romance; had nearly broken me with disappointment. Now it was writing—the book—that gave savor, possibility, to each day, and took me on night after night.

I had intended to stay for a week or so in Gloucester. I stayed nearly three months, unwilling, apart from everything else, to cut myself off from the good magic of the place.

Several weeks of original composition lay ahead of me when I left Gloucester and went to Wiltshire, to the valley. For the first four days, it rained and was misty; I could hardly see where I was. It was a good way of making the transition from the front room of the Gloucester house, which had been kind to me, kind to my African creation. It was good for the book, which was still in the delicate, suggestible state of its first draft. When a book was in that state, things around me could get written into it, could become part of the emotional charge of the narrative and, once written into a book, could be hard to take out. So I tried, during the composing of a book, to avoid disturbance. And that Wiltshire-valley fog was right.

In my imagination, at that stage of my story, I was living in a made-up Africa, a fairy-tale landscape that mixed (according to my need) the high, rainy plateau of Rwanda with the wet, terraced, cultivated hills of Kigezi, in western Uganda.

As a child in Trinidad, I had projected everything I read onto the Trinidad landscape, the Trinidad countryside, the Port of Spain streets. (Even Dickens and London I incorpo-

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rated into the streets of Port of Spain. Were the characters English, white people—or were they transformed into people I knew? Asking a question like that is a little like asking whether one dreams in color or in black-and-white. But I think I transferred the Dickens characters to people I knew. Though with a half or a quarter of my mind I knew that Dickens was all English, yet my Dickens cast, the cast in my head, was multiracial.) That ability to project what I read onto Trinidad—the colonial, tropical, multiracial world that was the only world I knew—diminished as I grew older. It was partly as a result of my increasing knowledge, self-awareness, and my embarrassment at the workings of my fantasy. It was also partly because of the writers; very few had the universal child's eye of Dickens. And that gift of fantasy became inoperable as soon as I came to England in 1950. When I was surrounded by the reality, English literature ceased to be universal, since it ceased to be the subject of fantasy. Now, in Wiltshire in winter, a writer now rather than a reader, I worked the child's fantasy the other way. I projected the solitude and emptiness and menace of my Africa onto the land around me. And when, four days later, the fog lifted and I went walking, something of the Africa of my story adhered to the land I saw.

I walked out between the stripped beeches and between the old, untrimmed yews, solid and dark green, and along the public road, past the cottages of flint and brick and thatch (but not yet seen clearly), and up the hill beside the windbreak to the barn at the top. I left all the marked public footpaths untrodden. I stuck to the downs, the grassed droveway, the walks around the farm at the bottom of the valley. And I continued easily in that rhythm of creation and walk: Africa in the writing in the morning, Wiltshire in the hour and a half or so after lunch. I projected Africa onto Wiltshire. Wiltshire—the Wiltshire I walked in—began to radiate or return Africa to me. So man and writer became one; the circle became complete.

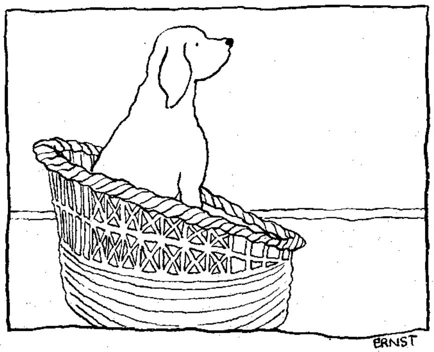
The Africa of my imagination was not the only source—Kenya, Uganda, the Congo, Rwanda. There was also Trinidad, to which I had gone back with a vision of romance, and where I had seen black men with threatening hair. It also now became Wiltshire. It was also the land created by my pain and exhaustion, expressed in the dream of the exploding head. A little over a year before, toward the end of the book about the New World, I had had the waking fantasy of myself as a corpse tossing lightly among the reeds at the bottom of a river (a river like the one in the Pre-Raphaelite painting of the drowned Ophelia, reproduced in the "Nelson's West Indian Reader" I had used in my elementary school in Trinidad; a river that turned out to be like the river in Wiltshire at the back of my cottage). Now, every night at some stage, an explosion in my head—occurring in a swift dream, giving me the conviction that this time I had to die, that this time I could not survive the great, continuing noise—awakened me.

Such violence in my Africa, in the security of my stone cottage, where I had a coal fire every night! So much had gone into that Africa of my fantasy. As a point of rest, as a refreshment, a promise of release, I allowed myself to play, lightly, with the ancient Mediterranean idea that had come to me from the de Chirico painting "The Enigma of Arrival."

The empty wharf; the glimpse of the mast of the ancient ship; the doorways; the wicked, hypnotizing city toward which the two cloaked figures walk.

For two days they had sailed, staying close to the shore. On the third day the captain wakened his deck passenger and pointed to the city on the shore. "There. You are there. Your journey's over." But the passenger, looking at the city in the morning haze, seeing the unremarkable city debris floating out on the sea, unremarkable though the city was so famous—rotten fruit, fresh branches, bits of timber, driftwood—the passenger had a spasm of fear. He sipped the bitter honey drink the captain had given him; he pretended to get his things together; but he didn't want to leave the ship.

But he would have to land. Such adventures were to come to him within the cutout, sunlit walls of that city. So classical, that city, seen from the ship; so alien within, so strange its gods and cults. My hero would end as a man on the run, a man passionate to get away to a clearer air. In desperation, he was to go through a doorway, and he was to find himself on the wharf again. But there was no mast above the walls of the wharf. No ship. His journey—his life's journey—had been made. It did not occur to me that the story that had come to me as a pleasant fantasy had already occurred, and was an aspect of my own.



A long time later, seeking, as always, a synthesis of my material, my worlds, my own developing way of seeing, I thought about what I am writing now, and returned to live in the past. And it was actually during the writing of the first section that I remembered something from the first week of my time in London, when I was staying in Angela's boarding house. My writer's ambition and my social inexperience and anxiety had suppressed so much of that empty time, had expunged so much from my memory.

I used to go out doing the sights. It was what tourists did. And one day, somewhere in central London, perhaps along the Embankment, I saw someone sitting on a bench below a statue. He was like part of the monument. He was in a dark suit: a small man, hot in the month of August. (The month and the weather were filled in later by the writer.) He was tired. He had been doing the sights and possibly having as little idea of what he was doing as I had: travel was a pleasure so much in the mind, so much something for later narrative.

He was a man from the Columbia—a butler, I thought. Perhaps he had told me that on the ship; or perhaps I had made it up, finding in him a resemblance to a butler in some film. He was slightly offhand with me now. It was as the night watchman had said during the gala night on the Columbia, when he lectured those of us who were outside the dance lounge on the quirks of human behavior. After three days on a ship, everyone was faithless, he had said; on shore, though, people became themselves again and forgot shipboard romances, and even acquaintances.

The butler was going on to France. A week there—no doubt in Paris: more sights—and then another ship would take him from Le Havre or Cherbourg back to New York, and the wandering holiday life would be over.

He would be back home, free of hotels and the daily tramping and the fatigue and the strange food. And I passionately wanted to go with him. I didn't want to be his companion or talk to him or be in his house or apartment. I wanted to be as he was at that moment, a man on the move. I passionately wanted, though hardly arrived in London, to be free of London. I didn't want to go back home, though; I knew there was nothing there. I just wanted, that day, trying to engage the offhand butler in conversation, trying to claim acquaintance with him in the strangeness of London, to feel that England was temporary for me, too.

Like the character in the story that came to me twenty years after, when I first came to the valley, I wanted to stay with the ship.

MORE than ten years after I moved to the valley, when I was almost at the end of my time there, I was strongly reminded of my first week in England. I had a letter from Angela. I hadn't heard from her or about her for thirty years. Even her name had ceased to be familiar; it was something I had to fumble for when I thought back to those early days. And this letter from Angela was more than a word or a note. It was many pages long, written over many days and, as the handwriting showed, written in many moods.

It was a round, fluent, thin-nibbed hand, now erect, now leaning to the right. Now the lines were straight, now crooked; now the letters were carefully shaped, now they moved up and down and were left unfinished. But the writing had an essential mode: it was the feminine English hand, round and fluent, the round shapes of the letters occasionally flattened, becoming wider than they were tall—egg shapes, speaking of a passive sensuality. The Englishness of the handwriting was a surprise; it was as though purely by living in England Angela had acquired that hand. The envelope carried the postmark of a town in Buckinghamshire: middle-class, commuter country.

The surname Angela gave (in brackets) at the end of her letter was English. I had forgotten her Italian surname, having seldom used it; but this English name seemed odd, seemed not to go with the person I knew. Yet she had given me an English name the first day we met. She called me Victor. She said that my Hindi or Sanskrit name was too hard for her and she

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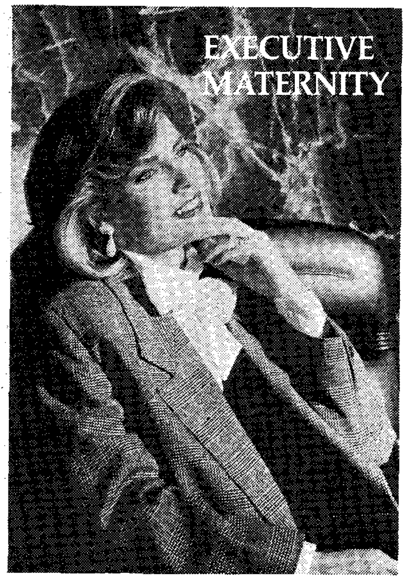

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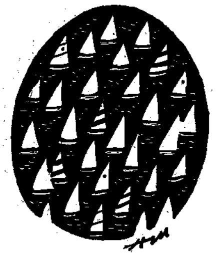
didn't intend to try to use it. Thirty years later, she remembered the name: *Dear Victor*. I was surprised. But perhaps no one (except very famous actors and dancers and sportsmen and people in the entertainment world who live by the physical admiration they receive from other people) forgets an admirer; and this may be truer of women, who as they get older must check over and over and count lovers and adventures.

Dear Victor. And it worked for me, too: through all the intervening sensualities, all the uses to which I had put my body, the name Angela had given me called up the enigma and false promise of that early time in London, and Angela's waitress clothes and red lips; it even called up the feel of her fur coat (in which, according to her story, she had run away from her lover's room or flat one night when he turned too violent); it called up the feel of her breasts, the liberty she permitted in her room when other people—her friends, displaced people from Europe and North Africa—were there. It called up—what I had very nearly forgotten, because there had been so much real writing since—my attempts in those days, out of my great ignorance, to turn Angela into suitable material. How often I had written about her, her breasts, her fur coat; how often I had introduced myself; how often I had improved or sought to improve everybody's circumstances!



She had heard me on the radio, she wrote; she had heard me many times, and had even seen me on television, but hadn't thought of troubling me until now. She reintroduced herself. And she rewrote her past, as once I had done. She said she had "managed" the "hotel" in "Kensington" where I stayed before going up to Oxford. Nothing about the Italian restaurant in the Earl's Court Road. "I don't think you know but I had a daughter in Italy my sister was looking after her until I could send for her. Well Victor this daughter is now a grown woman of thirty-five with children and a lovely baby girl of her own and speaking English you wouldn't know she was Italian." That was the end of the first part of the letter, all of it written in one kind of handwriting—regular, swift, strong, faltering only toward the end.

After this, the lines began to slope, the letters leaning more sharply, the spacing irregular: much time, perhaps days, had passed since she wrote the first part of the letter. "I used to walk out with someone you didn't like at all. And to tell you the truth Victor I didn't care for him all that much. But it was the war, things looked different then, you get mixed up with strange people. You hate the priests you don't care what they say and you know that youth is ignorant."

"Walk out"—extraordinary language. I had never heard the phrase used by anybody. So dainty, quaint, so old-fashioned-sounding and coy for Angela's association with a violent man who was a criminal and was probably in jail when I got to know her. They had met during the war in Italy. She had been glad to follow him from the mess of Italy after the war to the peace and order of London—though of London she would have known as little as I.

"It got bad after you went to Oxford and stopped coming to the hotel I was getting like one of these battered wives you read about in the papers these days only I wasn't a wife. And he started coming to the hotel and carrying on many a time I thought I was for the sack. But then one day somebody came to the hotel. A tall man in a tweed jacket and the second time he talked to me with his level steady gaze I felt he had been sent by God himself Victor you know I am no great believer but I saw the hand of God there I must say. I went to the Catholic church and lighted a candle which I hadn't done since I was a child. When your good friend heard what was happening he came over hotfoot to the hotel ready for blood I don't know what he expected. But as soon as he saw the man he had to deal with he went crazy it was pathetic it made me ashamed he was like a man ready to cry. Class is class, I saw it then, the English Gentleman Victor you cannot beat it, you cannot say you know England until you know the English Gentleman. Our good friend went away with his tail between his legs but then up to his old tricks as per usual he began to telephone me effing and dashing every other word going on and on about the tweed coat."

The man in the tweed coat married Angela—though, again, she knew as little of his background or the life to which he was taking her as she had of the man she first followed to England. She brought her daughter over from

Italy, and they all lived in Buckinghamshire until her husband died. In Angela's letter, those many happy years were passed over quickly; the man who had given her those happy years was hardly a presence.

Most of Angela's letter was about matters that had happened since the death of her husband, her savior. Most of Angela's letter was about her daughter, the daughter whom Angela had left behind as a child in Italy for some years, to follow—for very good reasons—her rough lover to London. The daughter had been brought over to live in Angela's Buckinghamshire house, had been sent to the local school. But suddenly, growing up, the daughter had declared herself Angela's enemy. The daughter's boyfriends had been wrong, according to Angela; and then the daughter's husband had been very wrong, had even been to jail. Daughter and husband had tormented Angela, and this had become especially bad since Angela's husband died. They had turned their children against Angela; they had forbidden Angela to come to their house.

This was the burden of the largest part of Angela's letter. It was of this, rather than of the past, that she had settled down to write. This was the letter she had written at different times, in different moods, with different degrees of stability, in different versions of the handwriting she would no doubt have picked up both from her daughter, educated at the local school, and from her husband. And this part of the letter was hard to read. It was very much like the letters I received sometimes from obsessed people: addressed to me but not really meant for me. I couldn't read it in a connected way. I read it in snatches, jumping from page to page.

"But this I know Victor the little girl will grow up and learn to use the phone though her mother doesn't think so and the little girl will want to telephone her gran who loves her. You have my address and telephone number Victor I don't have yours, please telephone and let us meet and talk over the good old days always the best I say."

I read this letter in my cottage. I felt my surroundings very acutely, felt their foreignness, felt the unrelatedness of my presence there. Beyond the garden wall, and where the water meadows began, were the great aspens. There had been three; they had made a giant fan; I had watched them grow. In the gales of one winter, I had

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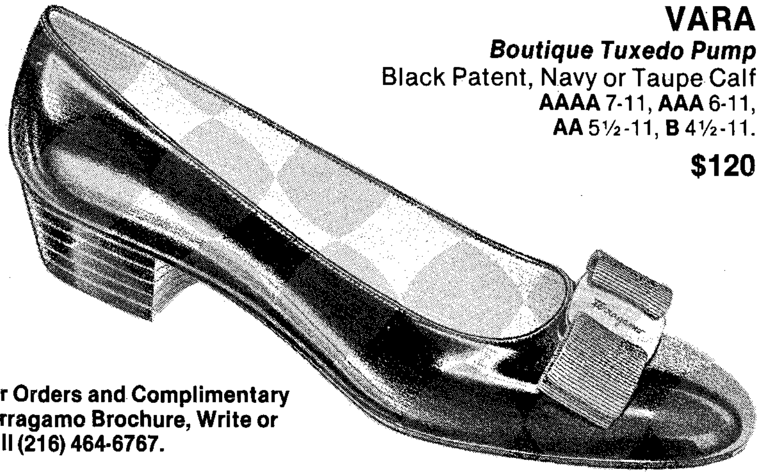

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actually been watching when one of the giant aspens snapped, twice, leaving a jagged, raw stump. The stump had grown to look less raw; there were powerful shoots from the stump. I had trained myself not to feel grief for things like that; I had trained myself in the belief that change was constant. On the other side of the cottage, the view in one direction was of the water meadows, seen beyond the fast-growing wild sycamores and the tall, unpruned box hedge. In the other direction, there were the old beeches, the yews, the dark, overshadowed lane to the road. Though I had never noted it down, I had had an intimation of a world in flux, a disturbed world, when I first saw Angela and her friends in Earl's Court. We had both, it seemed, continued to travel versions of our old route; we had both made circular journeys, returning from time to time to something like our starting point.

I didn't go to see her. I didn't telephone her. It would have been physically hard for me to go to where she was. And her disturbance, her instability, which had perhaps always existed, and which perhaps as an ardent young man I couldn't see, preferring to see the shape and color of her mouth—her instability, created no doubt by the terrible war and then her time in a London she could hardly have understood: that was too unsettling to me. I preserved my own balance with difficulty.

I was also deep in a book. My thoughts were of a whole new generation of young people in remote countries, made restless and uncertain in the late twentieth century not by travel but by the undoing of their old certainties, and looking for false consolation in the mind-quelling practices of a simple revealed religion. Angela took me back to the past. I wasn't living there, intellectually or imaginatively, any longer. My world and my themes had come to me long after I had ceased to write of Angela.

Her letter was soon covered over by the paper that accumulated in various piles in various places in my cottage. After some months, it would not have been possible for me to get at it easily. She never wrote again.

—V. S. Naipaul

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BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!

[*From the Atlanta Constitution*]

"I hope I can help Dan," Campbell said. "I'm going to work my tail off for him. We've got to get in the pits now, put our nose to the jugular vein and go after it."

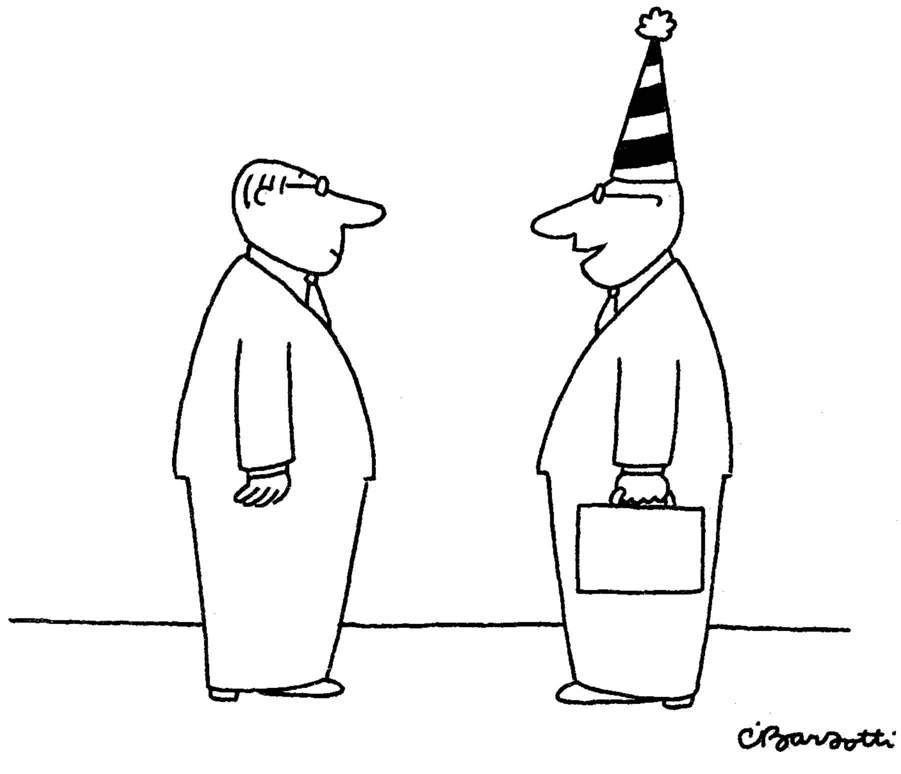
AMERICAN CHRONICLES

OUTDOOR LIFE

Central Oregon is an outdoor sort of place. Edwin Dyer, who moved to a Central Oregon town called Sisters in 1969, was an outdoor sort of guy. He had grown up in cities—mainly Portland, and then Eugene, where his father worked as a printer for the University of Oregon—but he always felt attached to the country. Several years ago, when Dyer was in his mid-forties and his children were getting nearly old enough to think about families of their own, he wrote down some of what he remembered from his childhood, and all he had to say about Portland, where he lived all but a few of the first fifteen years of his life, was that he had hated it. His reminiscences about his childhood concentrated on the summers he had spent on his grandparents' farm, near Yamhill, Oregon—an old-fashioned farm where the plowing was done behind a team of draft horses, and butter was turned in the parlor in the evenings, and baths were taken in a washtub in the kitchen, and the beef was butchered right out in the farmyard, and Grandpa's way of announcing a trip to the outhouse was to say, "I'm going to see Mrs. Murphy." What Ed Dyer tended to recall about his boyhood was hunting and fishing and horseback riding and Boy Scout hikes. What he remembered about high school was shop class and the rifle club. After high school and a hitch in the Navy, he got married—he and his wife, Tona, met at a Mormon church function—and got a job with an organization that could offer a career in the outdoors, the United States Forest Service. When he moved to Central Oregon, six years after joining the service, it was to work at the Sisters ranger station, which is responsible for the trees and wilderness trails and campgrounds and mountain lakes in the northwest quarter of a vast and magnificent patch of the outdoors called the Deschutes National Forest.

Sisters is the first town travellers come to when they drive through the central pass of the Cascade Mountains from what people in Oregon call the Valley—the Willamette River Valley, where most of the state's population is concentrated in a string of cities that includes Portland and Salem and Eugene. When the Dyers moved to Sisters, it was a quiet old logging town of six hundred people, known to a lot of travellers in Oregon as the place they stopped for gasoline and a short chat about the rigors of mountain driving, but it was beginning to change. In the seventies, outdoor sorts of places like Central Oregon were beginning to appeal to a lot of people from places like the Valley and the coastal cities of California—people who talked about getting out of the rat race or finding a slower pace of life or trading some income for convenience to a wilderness trail and a mountain lake. A number of people who had passed through Sisters on their way to ski on a nearby mountain or to camp in one of the national forests started thinking about moving there. It's practically inside the Deschutes National Forest. From just about anywhere in town you can look across pastureland or ponderosa pines and see the snowy peaks of spectacular mountains known as the Three Sisters. In the mid-seventies, the commercial district of Sisters, which had always consisted of the nondescript hodgepodge of stores customarily found in old Western towns, began to take on a look that a lot of visitors found attractive. When Black Butte Ranch, a huge tract of private land that cuts into the national forest about eight miles west of town, was developed into an expensive vacation-home complex, the developer, as an alternative to putting in a shopping center, financed the wooden façades and rough-cedar posts and board-and-batten siding and ersatz balconies that can transform a place from what old Western towns usually look like into what people think old Western towns ought to look like—a process now known in the West as Westernization.

Sooner or later, the shops behind the Western façades had names like The Cook's Nook and The Hen's Tooth and Nancy's Fancy's and The Elegant Dromedary. Partly because a large ranch just outside town has found some customers right in the area for the exotic and expensive beasts it breeds, the animals seen grazing in the pastureland around Sisters these days include not just the customary Herefords and Black Angus but also llamas. The developer of the Black Butte Ranch complex eventually completed a more modest development on the edge of Sisters called Tollgate—it was named not for a throughway exit but for the nineteenth-century toll operation that provided the money to keep the Cascade Mountain pass clear—and gave its streets names like Oxbow and Lariat and Saddle Horn and Stagecoach. Some of the old-timers in



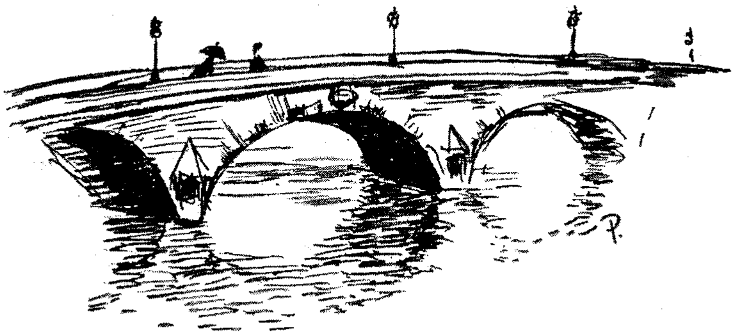
"Oh, just great, Dick. How are things going with you?"

Sisters have grumbled a bit about the fancying up and the summer tourists and the parking problem. Some people in Sisters still like to ask exactly what you'd do with a llama worth twenty thousand dollars. ("You sell it to someone who's willing to pay twenty thousand dollars for a llama.") Still, considering the changes Sisters has seen in the past fifteen years, it is not a place where people seem to dwell on contention. What they tend to talk about is whether to go cross-country skiing after work or how their dogs did at field-obedience class or when the wilderness trails might be dry enough for horse-packing trips. They talk about the outdoors. When they're asked why they live in Sisters—why they took a pay cut to move from Los Angeles, why they came over from the Valley before they were certain a suitable job was available—they are likely to answer by making a sweeping gesture toward the Cascades and saying something about "the quality of life."

Maintaining the wilderness trails became one of Ed Dyer's responsibilities not long after he began working at the Sisters station, and they were his pride. He estimated that, on foot or on horseback, he covered six or seven hundred miles on the trails every year himself. He presided over trail-maintenance crews funded by the Forest Service and whatever government program happened to be in operation—the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act or the Youth Conservation Corps or the Young Adult Conservation Corps. He acted as liaison with equestrian groups that made use of the trails. As a Scoutmaster, he was known for organizing and leading "fifty-milers"—week-long backpacking trips that covered a full fifty miles on the wilderness trails.

After several years in Sisters, the Dyers had moved to the outskirts of Redmond—a much larger, more conventional Central Oregon town, twenty miles to the east—so that the children wouldn't have to take a twenty-mile bus ride every morning to get to the nearest high school. Even before the move, though, the entire family was active in the Redmond Mormon church. Both Ed and Tona Dyer taught Sunday school. Ed Dyer had become Scoutmaster of the church's Boy Scout Troop 26 within a year of his assignment to Sisters. Dyer had never really left Scouting. Years before his own boys were old enough to be Boy Scouts and years after they had gone on to other things, he went through a constant round of troop meetings and courts of honor and campouts and fifty-milers. It was said around Redmond that Troop 26 did consistently well in amassing merit badges and producing Eagle Scouts. Ed Dyer was given any number of awards. Scouting, in the view of another member of the congregation, was Dyer's "prestige thing, his ego trip."

Being a successful Scoutmaster may bring a certain kind of prestige—or some community appreciation, at least—in an outdoor sort of place like Central Oregon. There are a lot of places—indoor sorts of places—where it would bring no prestige at all. There are a lot of places—places that value social skills and appearance and sophistication—where Ed Dyer might have had some difficulty fitting in. Even his friends acknowledged that once he had you cornered he could tell you a lot more about a fifty-mile hike than you wanted to know. The Western clothes he wore when he was out of his Forest Service uniform did nothing to disguise the fact that he had put on a lot of weight over the years. He was not thought of as someone who always knew precisely what to say at precisely the right moment. But Ed Dyer was someone who seemed to have found a niche in Central Oregon. Through Scouting and other good works, he had become a valued member of the community. He had his wilderness trails and his hunting and his horseback riding. Behind the Dyers' house, two or three miles toward Sisters on Highway 126, there was a patch of pastureland where he kept a couple of horses. Dyer rode on the trails, and he rode in the Deschutes County Sheriff's Posse. He and his wife—a rather retiring, soft-spoken woman with a strong commitment to the Mormon Church—not only raised four children of their own but occasionally took in children of friends and relatives when help was needed. In Central Oregon, the Dyers had carved out a pretty good life for themselves—except for what was, much later, always referred to as Ed's problem. His problem was pedophilia—homosexual pedophilia. He could not control his sexual desire for young boys.



THE Mormon Church does not have a professional ministry. The leader of a Mormon congregation—in Mormon terminology, the leader of a ward—is a layman who is known as the bishop. In 1982, the bishop of the Mormon ward in Redmond got some disturbing news about Ed Dyer. One of the Scouts in Troop 26 had told his parents that Dyer made a sexual advance to him during an overnight camping trip. Dyer's version was that he had inadvertently touched the boy while they were sleeping in a tent together, and the boy had panicked. But it turned out that there were other stories of sexual misconduct concerning Dyer and Scouts in Troop 26. Ed Dyer was asked by the church to resign as Scoutmaster.

Aside from that, the church leadership had trouble figuring out exactly what to do about him. The first step was easy. The president of what the Mormons call a stake—a stake is roughly the equivalent of a diocese—has a high council that at times sits as a sort of ecclesiastical court. The court has the power to excommunicate a Mormon. It can also simply reprimand him. In Dyer's case, it took a middle course—what the Mormons call disfellowship, a sort of probation that is based on a period of repentance and rehabilitation. The church authorities did not inform the civil authorities of the allegations against Dyer.

It could be said, of course, that the church was simply trying to avoid embarrassment, or even lawsuits: If the accusations against Dyer were true, after all, the Redmond ward had for twelve years had a pedophile in a position of trust and intimacy with young boys. The Mormons would offer some other explanations. It was always possible, for instance, that the accusation by the Boy Scout was untrue or exaggerated; Dyer apparently told some members of the congregation that it was all a mistake and he was being treated unfairly. It could be argued that the fact that the inquiry had started within the church gave it the equivalent of the confidentiality traditional between priest and penitent—although there is no indication that Ed Dyer confessed to anything. It was presumably also true that the Mormons had difficulty facing an issue that a lot of them considered appalling and repugnant. Apparently, those in the ward who came to know about Ed Dyer's problem rarely discussed it. "It's the sort of subject you avoid because it's distasteful," one of them said recently. "It's something you just don't want to believe has happened."

For whatever reason, it was about a year before the high-council court prepared to convene again to consider refellowshipping Dyer. By that time, though, one high-council member had heard what seemed to be a corroborating allegation from the time Dyer still lived in the Valley, and had learned that Dyer had put up notices in places like gunshops announcing that he was certified to give the hunting-education course required in Oregon for any hunter under eighteen—notices that could, of course, be seen as a device to meet boys. That member was asked by the stake president to undertake an investigation—a role provided for in Church rules. The boys in Troop 26 were reluctant to say anything, but the investigator began calling around to young men who had been Boy Scouts in Redmond in the past. He spent just about full time on the investigation for three weeks, and at the end he gave the stake president a thirty-page dossier, accompanied by tape recordings that, with the permission of his informants, he had made of several telephone conversations. The report indicated that the incident with the Boy Scout in the tent was not an isolated incident but part of a pattern that went back at least twenty-five years.

The stake president did not reconvene the court to consider refellowshipping Dyer, but some time passed before he decided what to do instead. Part of the delay may have been caused by preoccupation with other matters. In August of 1983, one of the Dyers' sons, a young man of nineteen named Lance, was found to have leukemia. The members of the ward rallied around to help the Dyer family through the months of treatment—treatment that turned out to be of no avail. Lance Dyer died of pneumonia in May of 1984. It didn't seem to be the best time to pursue a case against Ed Dyer. Also, a member of the church who was familiar with the case said recently, Dyer "kept saying he was going to turn himself in." It had been the high council's understanding that during the disfellowship period Dyer was going to seek counselling and was going to avoid situations that would put him in the company of young boys. Apparently, the council concluded that Dyer had not complied with that understanding, because when it finally convened as a court, in late 1984, the decision was to excommunicate him. "I stayed away from kids for a long time," Dyer said some time later, when his problem was finally being dealt with in a court of law. "And then Louis came along."

LIKE Ed Dyer, Susan Birdsell Conner grew up loving the outdoors. She lived on the outskirts of Santa Barbara, California, where her parents owned a beauty parlor and her father dabbled a bit in real estate. From the time Susan and her twin sister, Sharon, were eight or nine, they both knew that they were going to be veterinarians, and they both knew that they were someday going to live in a place where the horses were back of the house rather than miles away in a boarding stable. Their mother can summon up life with two aspiring veterinarians in one sentence: "We had cages all over." Like many identical twins, the Birdsell sisters were a lot more comfortable with each other than with other people. By the time they entered school, they had used a private language with each other so long that they had to be treated for slight speech impediments. They enrolled together at the University of California at Davis, and in 1967 they graduated as veterinarians. Both married Davis veterinary students who planned to practice as equine veterinarians. It was a double wedding.

Sharon got to Sisters first. She and her husband, Eric Sharpnack, moved there from Point Reyes, California, in 1978 and took over the Sisters Veterinary Clinic. She concentrated on small animals; he treated horses, and on a number of occasions llamas. Susan had been living in the East with her husband, a racetrack veterinarian named Edward Conner, and their two sons. She and her husband were divorced in 1976, and after a couple of years she and the boys moved to Oregon, where she eventually joined the Sharpnacks' practice. Not long after that, Sharon

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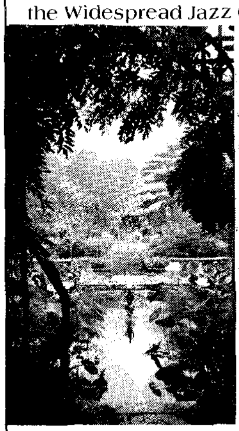

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and Eric Sharpnack were divorced. Seventeen years after the double wedding, the Birdsell twins—both divorced and both with two children—were in practice together as the sole partners of the Sisters Veterinary Clinic.

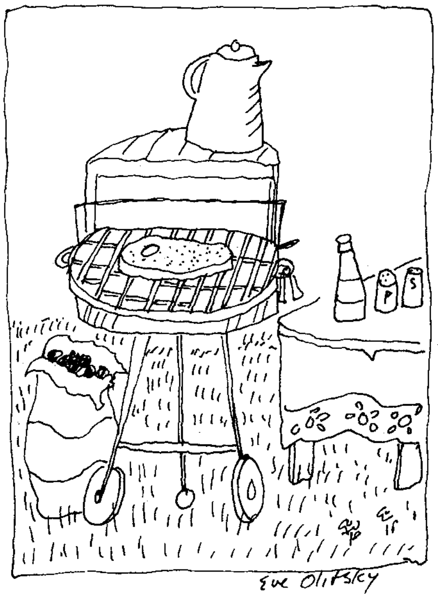
They seemed to be among those people who were well suited to Central Oregon and might have been uncomfortable in a place less focussed on the outdoors. “I don’t think they’d even know how to dress up,” a friend said of them recently. Susan Conner bought a house in Tollgate—a simple rough-cedar house that had nearly an acre of ponderosa pines and a paddock in the back. Tollgate, like Black Butte Ranch, is virtually inside the national forest, and she took great joy in being able to ride from her own paddock onto the forest’s trails and logging roads. She became particularly active in what is known locally as wagon driving—leisurely caravans of horse-drawn conveyances that might range from sulkies to restored buggies to covered wagons.

Susan had one problem not shared by her sister. Sharon Sharpnack’s children were both girls, and their father was still in Sisters. Susan Conner’s boys had virtually no contact with their father, who remained in the East. Her younger son, Brian, was an outgoing boy who had adjusted with relative ease to the move to Oregon and life in Sisters. But her older son, Louis, was more diffident than his brother and more obviously in need of a father figure. That was why Susan Conner was so pleased when, during Louis’s eighth-grade year at Sisters Junior High School, he met an avuncular outdoorsman from the Forest Service named Ed Dyer.

Louis Conner, who was then fifteen, seemed a couple of years younger than he was—a slim, nice-looking boy with sandy hair and a quick, shy smile. He had his mother’s love of animals and the outdoors. He belonged to two 4-H groups—one having to do with horses, the other with dog obedience and showmanship. He was gentle and unassertive—the sort of boy who tends not to register on his classmates in a large school. The adults who came into contact with him—teachers, 4-H leaders, Susan Conner’s friends—thought of him as a polite young man, eager to be befriended by them. “Every year, there are boys, and sometimes girls, who adopt you,” James Green, Louis’s science teacher at Sisters Junior High, has said. “You could tell he wanted to talk to an adult—particularly a man.”

In the spring of 1984, just before Easter vacation, Jim Green asked the Forest Service if it was possible to have someone come out and instruct his eighth graders in the proper use of the national forest. The Forest Service sent Ed Dyer. Green and Dyer gave a three-day course on how to exist in the wilderness—how to use a compass, how to read a map, how to pack a horse, how to survive in an emergency. During the visit, Dyer said he was looking for someone to hike the trails with him—to take part in “camping and skiing and different things in the outdoors.” As Dyer later recalled it, Louis Conner “turned around and said, ‘I’d like to be your friend and go with you.’ ”

By that time, as it happened, a member of the Mormon congregation had informed an acquaintance on the Redmond police force that Ed Dyer had been disfellowshipped because of allegations of sexual misconduct with Boy Scouts. The informant suggested that it was a matter the police should investigate, but eventually it became obvious to him that whatever investigation had taken place was not going to lead to an indictment. It may be that the Redmond police had problems with the statute of limitations. It may be that there were problems with jurisdiction; a lot of the crimes that were alleged, after all, had occurred on hikes and encampments far outside the Redmond city limits, in the Central Oregon outdoors. It may be that the police were reluctant to launch a vigorous investigation of good old Ed Dyer or that, like some members of the church, they were simply unable to face the possibility that what was being said about the man who had been entrusted with so many boys for so many years was true.



Louis worked that summer as a volunteer helping to maintain trails in the national forest. He began to talk about the possibility of making the Forest Service his career. Ed Dyer and Louis did a lot of things that a father and son would do in an outdoor sort of place. They went deer hunting together. Dyer gave Louis a shotgun. When the time came for Louis to buy a horse, Dyer helped him pick one out. Dyer often dropped by the house in Tollgate. He offered to supply the Conners with firewood. He had discussions with Susan Conner about how Louis was doing in school and what sort of friends he should be meeting. The adults who knew Louis—the woman who led his 4-H horse group, for instance—thought it was “really nice that he could have an older friend who was interested in the same things he was.” Susan Conner was delighted. She thought that her worries about the absence of a father figure for Louis were over.

Of course, neither Susan Conner nor Louis Conner nor their friends knew why Ed Dyer had resigned as Scoutmaster of Troop 26 two years before he met Louis at Sisters Junior High. They were not Mormons. They knew nothing of the deliberations concerning Ed Dyer in the stake high council. They knew nothing about an investigation by the Redmond police. Sooner or later, though, the Forest Service was told of the information that the police had about Ed Dyer. As a result, the ranger in charge of the Sisters Ranger District walked into Dyer’s office in February of 1985, closed the door behind him, and informed Dyer that he would no longer be permitted to work with young people unless other adults were present. The allegations in the hands of the police had not been proved, of course, and the ranger apparently tried to be balanced in his response. Recalling the ranger’s instructions later, Dyer remarked, “He said, ‘Well, just be prudent. Don’t put yourself in a situation where you’re set up.’ And I followed those rules.”

Dyer did not interpret the rules as applying to his relationship with Louis Conner. Louis continued to be Dyer’s companion in the outdoors—although there were times when he seemed reluctant to go on outings with Dyer, and periods when they didn’t see each other at all. Susan Conner thought that Louis might be getting tired of Dyer's stories or that he was beginning to prefer the company of boys his own age. Dyer persisted, though, and eventually Louis would accept one of his invitations. Dyer took him elk hunting. Two or three times, Dyer took him to an event called a Mountain Man Rendezvous—a weekend encampment at which men dress in buckskin clothes and hold marksmanship contests with black-powder muskets and drink a lot of modern-day beer. In the summer of 1985, a little more than a year after their meeting at Jim Green's science class, Dyer arranged for Louis to work as a member of the Youth Conservation Corps crew maintaining trails.

Meanwhile, the informant from the Mormon Church, having tried both the Redmond police force and the Deschutes County Sheriff's Department with no success, turned to the State Police. The State Police were interested. They didn't foresee any jurisdictional problems. They weren't troubled by the fact that so many of the allegations were beyond the statute of limitations; the behavior pattern of a pedophile tends to be so unvarying, they told their informant, that incidents within the statute of limitations would almost certainly be turned up. The case was assigned to Lynn Fredrickson, a State Police detective who has a reputation for dealing sympathetically and effectively with young people. New names of boys who knew Ed Dyer were not difficult to find. On June 18, 1985, Fredrickson showed up at the Sisters ranger station and asked to speak to a summer Youth Conservation Corps employee named Louis Conner.

Louis acknowledged nothing, but when Dyer learned of the interview he agreed to talk with Fredrickson. Eventually, Dyer admitted having initiated sexual encounters with Louis. He said that on a number of occasions he and Louis had engaged in mutual masturbation. When Fredrickson reinterviewed Louis, he gathered that Louis had felt trapped. When his mother had found him reluctant to accompany Dyer on outings, he hadn't known how to explain his reluctance without telling her what he couldn't bear to say. He had been worried about displeasing the man who had settled into a role so much like a father's. He had been worried about his job and his hope for a career in the Forest Service. Louis's story about what had happened

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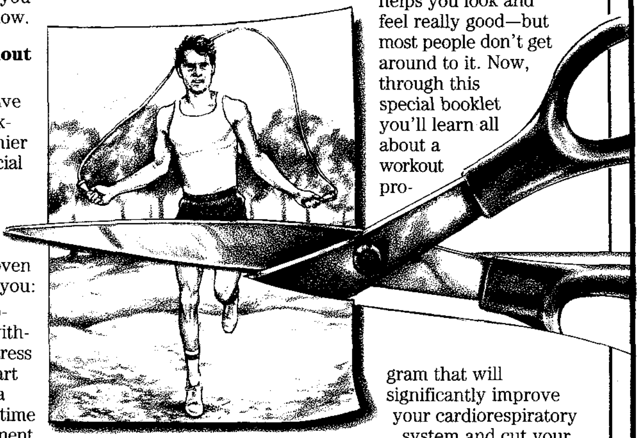

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on the outings matched Dyer's story. Another boy—a boy named Keith, who had met Dyer at a church supper —told a similar story. Charges of sexual abuse were filed against Ed Dyer.

For a while, it looked as if prosecuting Dyer might necessitate Louis's testifying in open court. Louis was obviously reluctant. The prospect of being labelled a homosexual filled him with dread. "He wanted to coöperate with the process," a clinical social worker who saw him at the time has said, "but he wanted to keep it a secret." Still, both Louis and his mother were determined that he would testify if that was required to convict Ed Dyer. It turned out not to be necessary. After protracted negotiations, a plea bargain was made: In return for Dyer's guilty plea to two charges of second-degree sexual abuse, the district attorney of Deschutes County agreed to recommend concurrent sentences and to drop any investigation of similar charges. Instead of a trial, there was a sentencing hearing—in Bend, the seat of Deschutes County—to consider questions of punishment and treatment and restitution.

There was testimony from the mothers of both boys involved. "Before I knew all this had happened, I had said that I thought Ed would be blessed for his interest in my son," Keith's mother said. "But I know now that that's not true, because his interest was selfish. It wasn't to help my son or to love him. He simply used him." Susan Conner answered questions about how much had been spent on counselling for Louis, who still seemed to her depressed. Although the one news item carried in local papers about the case, a tiny item in the Redmond *Spokesman*, had not mentioned the names of the boys involved, she said that some kids at school had brought up the subject with Louis. "He doesn't want to go anywhere on weekends," she said. "He doesn't want to be around other high-school kids, because he thinks they're going to talk to him about this, and because of his depression." She had decided, she said, that she was in need of counselling as well: "My son blames me for this, because I encouraged him to go with Ed, because I thought Ed was such a wonderful person."

Most of what the judge heard, though, was mitigating evidence presented by Dyer's lawyer. Tona Dyer, speaking in a soft, sad voice, said that her husband was a kind man and a good father. A couple of men who knew Dyer through the Boy Scouts testified that he was sincere and law-abiding and had made a great sacrifice of his time and energy in the years he spent as Scoutmaster of Troop 26. It was brought out that Ed Dyer had already suffered for his crimes. He had, in effect, lost his job—the Forest Service had allowed him to take early retirement—and that job had been the center of his life. ("It meant a lot to me to work in that job," Dyer testified. "I really enjoyed it. It was a way of life. It wasn't just a job.") He had been forced to leave Scouting. He had been excommunicated by his church. Although two of the counsellors who met with Dyer had come to the conclusion that he was without remorse—they thought he regretted only that he got caught—Tona Dyer testified that they were mistaken. "He's been very depressed, and he is very remorseful," she said. "He just sits around or lays around. . . . He feels really bad because of what he's done and how people feel toward him. He feels really bad. And he feels bad for the people he's hurt. More than, I think, anyone realizes." Mrs. Dyer said she had known about her husband's problem for years. "It does bother me," she said. "But I feel that you don't always look at the thing that someone does wrong. You look at the other qualities a person has, too. And I think if you care about someone you expect that these people are good and maybe they'll be able to crack this problem. And I do care about him."

Dyer himself was on the stand for some time. He denied that he had used his position as Scoutmaster as a way of arranging sexual encounters. "It might be construed that way, but it wasn't intended that way," he said. "That was not my reason for staying in the program." Dyer said that he had always wanted to seek help but had been afraid it would mean arrest and the loss of everything—his job, his family. "Most of the boys that I molested by their terms, by the terms of the law, I really loved," he said. "I didn't want to hurt them." Then he looked at Louis Conner, who was sitting in the courtroom. "I know that Louis back here, sitting there, I know that he probably hates me now, because of the problems I brought on him and his family," Dyer said. "But I truly did love him and enjoyed his company and all the good things we did. And I'm painfully regretful of that problem and that situation. And if there was any way I could erase it, and make his life better, I would sure do it."

Dyer may have been right about Louis's hating him. Louis was angered by a lot of what was said at the sentencing hearing, particularly Dyer's answer to a question about who had initiated the encounters between him and the boys: "It was mutual part of the time and part of the time maybe mostly myself." Partly because of Louis's fear of being labelled a homosexual, the question of who was to blame was terribly important to him—in the words of one counsellor, "he needed to be real clear that it was not *his* fault that this happened"—and Dyer, despite his guilty plea, seemed reluctant to accept the blame. Just after the guilty plea, Susan Conner had angrily informed the district attorney's office of a telephone call from Dyer in which he had told her that the encounters had come about by mutual consent, and that Louis would be free to make his own decisions on such matters as soon as he had his eighteenth birthday. Also, Louis, as he sat in the courtroom, knew what he had been afraid and ashamed to tell Detective Fredrickson: On two or three occasions, his sexual contact with Ed Dyer had gone beyond the mutual masturbation that Dyer had admitted. The district attorney's office had eventually learned of those occasions. Presumably, one reason Dyer had finally agreed to plead guilty was the knowledge that if Louis Conner testified he would be testifying about sodomy.

There was nothing in the judge's decision that might have made Louis feel better about what was happening. Although the pre-sentencing report had recommended a considerable time in jail, Dyer was sentenced to serve only twenty days, more or less at his own convenience. The judge also ruled that Dyer would have to enter a counselling program for sex offenders and would have to be on supervised probation for three years and would have to avoid associating with boys under eighteen. He was not specifically forbidden to see Louis Conner, even after the prosecutor pointed out that Louis, who may have looked only fifteen or so, would be eighteen before the year was out. "From what all the witnesses have testified to, why you're a fine fellow, with a good work record, who's done a great deal for the community," the judge told Dyer. "If you feel positive about yourself, why these episodes aren't going to mar your life, and you can make the best of it."

Presumably, Louis had been angry even before he got to the hearing. Two nights earlier, he had taken out the shotgun Dyer gave him—a .16-gauge single-shot. He had removed most of the stock. He had sawed off the barrel about six inches from the trigger. A sawed-off shotgun is, of course, easier to conceal than a full-length shotgun, and is also more maneuverable. For targets more than a few yards away, there is a sacrifice in accuracy and power. A sawed-off shotgun is not an effective weapon for hunting deer. What it is used for is killing someone at close range.

JANUARY 22ND was a bleak day in Sisters. A cold rain fell intermittently. The stunning view of the Cascades didn't exist. It was a Wednesday, five days after the judge in Bend had pronounced sentence on Ed Dyer. As on any other school morning, Louis Conner climbed onto the bus that took him to high school on the edge of Redmond. He was wearing the blue parka he normally wore to school. Hidden underneath his parka was the sawed-off shotgun. At Redmond High School, Louis got off the bus with the other students, but he didn't go into the school building. He walked back down Highway 126 in the direction of Sisters—toward Ed Dyer's house.

Dyer's pickup was not in the driveway. He had gone to a swap shop in Bend to see what he might get for a set of sleigh bells he was ready to part with. On the way back, he stopped in Redmond to chat with a friend. In a cold, driving rain, Louis Conner stood in a field waiting. Two hours later, Dyer still hadn't returned. Finally, Louis, soaked and shivering, knocked

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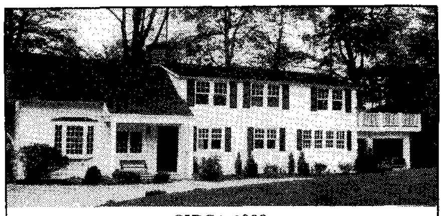

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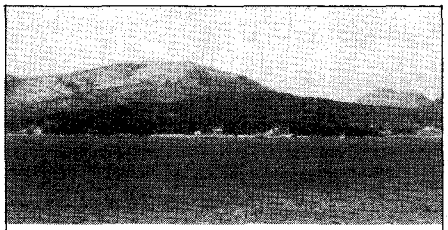

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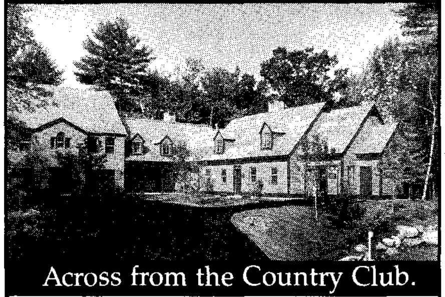

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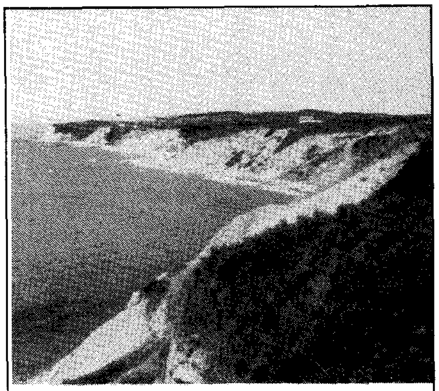

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on the door and told Tona Dyer that he was there to see her husband. She was concerned by his presence. Her husband, after all, had been instructed by the judge not to associate with boys under eighteen. She asked Louis in, though, and told him to stand next to the wood stove to dry out. Twenty minutes later, Ed Dyer showed up. When he was told that Louis wanted to talk to him, he said he'd have to call his probation officer first. The probation officer told Dyer that he should not talk to Louis. Dyer was instructed to drive Louis back to Redmond High School immediately. Tona Dyer, who didn't drive, was to accompany her husband and Louis, so that they wouldn't be alone. The three of them walked out to the pickup. Ed Dyer and Louis Conner had exchanged hardly a word. At the pickup, Dyer opened the door on the driver's side, and then went over to lock what he called his sport shed—the place he kept a lot of his outdoor equipment. As Dyer returned to the truck, Louis stepped out from behind the driver's door, holding the shotgun. Tona Dyer thought she heard her husband say something like "No, Louis!" Louis shot him in the chest.

Dyer was still standing when his wife ran into the house to call an ambulance, but she was certain that he had been mortally wounded. In Redmond, a few miles away, Lynn Fredrickson, the State Police detective who had filed charges against Ed Dyer, was eating lunch in his car when he heard the report of a shooting on Highway 126. The address sounded familiar, and he asked the dispatcher who lived there. When he was told that it was the home of an Edwin Dyer, he thought he knew what must have happened, and he headed for Dyer's house. Before he got there, an ambulance had arrived, and the crew had seen that there was nothing to be done for Ed Dyer. It was Fredrickson and his partner who found Louis, an hour or so later. He was standing in a field about three-quarters of a mile from the Dyers' house. He offered no resistance.

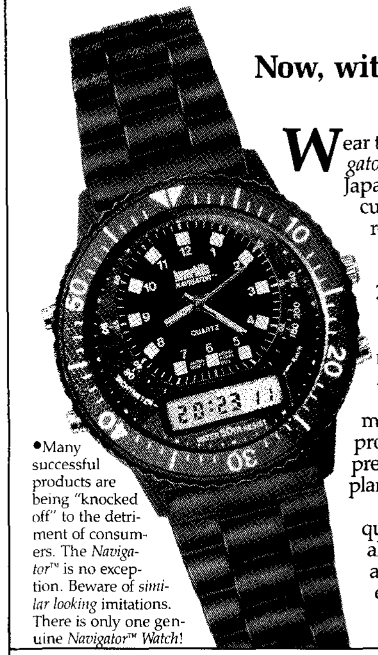
IN Oregon, any sentence imposed by a juvenile court, the court that normally has jurisdiction over everyone under the age of eighteen, expires on the defendant's twenty-first birthday—so a juvenile defendant who is, say, seventeen cannot be locked up for more than four years no matter what he has done. In the case of certain serious felonies, though, a district attorney can move in juvenile court to have a defendant who is fifteen or older remanded to the adult court system, where no such limitation on the sentence exists. The criteria for making the decision include the previous criminal record of the juvenile and the protection required by the community and the "aggressive, violent, premeditated, or willful manner in which the offense was alleged to have been committed." The district attorney of Deschutes County announced that he would attempt to have Louis Conner remanded to the adult court system and tried for murder.

It was not a popular decision. There were people in Deschutes County who said that there was no reason for any trial at all. For some people, Louis Conner had become a sort of hero; at the very least, he seemed more the victim than the offender. Although the risk would have been too great, it occurred to Louis's lawyers that if they elected to try him in the adult court system, where his fate would be determined by a jury rather than a judge, it was unlikely that any jury would convict Louis, no matter what the evidence. It's possible that there were people in Deschutes County who agreed with the district attorney that Louis was guilty of murder. It's possible that there were people who, whatever their views on how the case should be dealt with legally, were disturbed by indications that in the public mind Louis Conner, the timid boy who dreaded the thought of being labelled a homosexual, had, in the tradition of the Hollywood Old West, transformed himself into a hero with one blast of a gun. If there were such people, they kept their opinions to themselves. In letters to the editor and gossip at the cafés and late-night talk in the bars, the prevailing opinion was that Ed Dyer got what was coming to him.

In Sisters, at least, that view was often expressed after a qualifying observation about how nobody has a right to take the law into his own hands. Most of the people in Sisters are not the sort of people who condone violence or preach vengeance. It's the sort of place whose response to what had happened included inviting two specialists on the problem of sexual abuse to come to town and conduct a symposium. Still, people in Sisters were disturbed at what seemed to be a disparity in the way the county had treated Ed Dyer and the way it was treating Louis Conner. "I think people don't blame Ed or Louis but the judicial system," Eric Dolson, the editor of the weekly paper in Sisters, said as the remand hearing got under way in Bend last March. "People like to think that the guilty are punished and the innocent are protected. It's part of our sense of security. If they think there's reason to believe that's not true, it upsets them." When the remand hearing began, about two months after Ed Dyer was shot to death, a defense fund for Louis Conner in Sisters had raised more than eight thousand dollars.

The deputy district attorney who represented the state in the remand hearing—Roy Miller, the same deputy district attorney who had prosecuted Ed Dyer—basically argued that the three and a half years until Louis Conner's twenty-first birthday was not enough time for the state to have him in custody, whether the custody was considered treatment or punishment. Miller argued that the crime had in fact been premeditated. The shotgun had been sawed off two days before the sentencing hearing that so upset Louis; there was no indication that Dyer had said or done anything to provoke Louis just before the shooting. Louis's lawyer, a former Eugene prosecutor named Stephen Tiktin, said that it was Louis who had been the victim—the victim of "sexual abuse perpetrated by a homosexual predatory pedophile." Louis had been willing even to undergo the embarrassment of testifying in open court in order to bring the man who victimized him to justice, Tiktin said, but the sentencing hearing convinced him that "the system had failed." The state presented witnesses to support its contention that there were facilities in the adult correctional system appropriate for Louis; the defense presented witnesses to support its contention that Louis was a natural victim who would be "fair game as soon as he steps into the bowels of the penitentiary."

The witness who seemed to speak with the most authority was Dr. John Cochran, the senior forensic clinical psychologist for the State of Oregon, who was called by the prosecution but testified in favor of the defense contention that Louis should be treated as a juvenile. Cochran turned out to be a pudgy man with a mustache and a



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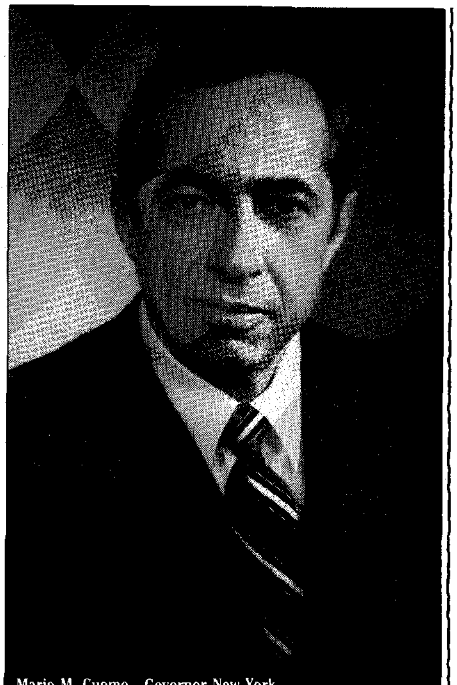

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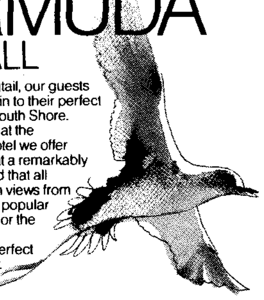

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thoughtful expression that made him appear personally concerned even when he happened to be speaking of test results that sounded rather technical. In a way, Cochran's testimony amounted to a retelling of the story of Ed Dyer and Louis Conner, this time in psychological terms. Cochran described Louis as a naïve and passive and dependent boy, less mature socially and emotionally than the average boy his age. More than most boys, Cochran said, Louis had a need for the approval of others, to the point of being willing to subject himself to "abuse or intimidation to avoid rejection or abandonment." In other words, Cochran said, Louis was an easily manipulated boy who was perfect prey for Ed Dyer—"a pedophile extremely experienced at grooming people like Louis." In Cochran's view, the stress Louis was under once the investigation of Dyer began was magnified by Dyer's response to the charge against him. "As the circle began to tighten, instead of protecting his pseudo-child he abandoned him," Cochran said of Dyer. "Once in court, instead of making a clean breast of it he blamed Louis." The result, Cochran said, was "a massive amount of betrayal." According to Cochran's interpretation of the events, Louis had not gone to Dyer's house with the intention of shooting anybody; the shotgun was an "equalizer," a way of making certain that the larger man paid attention. Louis desperately wanted to find out why Dyer had said in court that some of the sexual encounters had been initiated by both of them, Cochran said, and Dyer's adherence to the probation officer's instructions not to talk to Louis was, ironically, the last straw: "The usual coping methods that Louis has were obliterated." Cochran testified that the combination of events required to drive Louis Conner to violence would be unlikely ever to occur again. He was, in Cochran's term, "a situational offender."

To no one's surprise, the judge held that the juvenile court would retain jurisdiction over Louis Conner. In holding for the defense, though, the judge, John M. Copenhaver, was careful to separate himself from the notion that Ed Dyer had got what he deserved—the notion that sexual offenders should be "destroyed like rabid dogs." In announcing his decision, Judge Copenhaver said, "Sexual abuse does not mean that a person's life has no value to us. The loss of any life diminishes the quality of life in our community."

SHORTLY after the remand hearing, Louis Conner's lawyer sent the tort notices required if he intended to file suits in civil court against the Redmond Police Department and the United States Forest Service—suits that would presumably allege negligence that led to Ed Dyer's remaining in the company of boys even after his background was known. There were two more hearings remaining in the criminal case against Louis. From what the judge and the defense had said in court, it seemed clear that they both believed what Louis had done fit the legal definition of manslaughter, but there had to be a hearing on that question. And there had to be a hearing—what juvenile courts call a dispositional hearing—to decide on a sentence. While those hearings were being prepared for, the judge let Louis remain at home. Susan Conner found her son in relatively good spirits. "People expect him to be depressed," she said. "But for the first time he doesn't have the cloud of Ed Dyer hanging over him."

In April, Judge Copenhaver ruled that the shooting of Ed Dyer had been manslaughter. Then, last month, those involved in the case gathered again in Judge Copenhaver's courtroom for the final hearing in what was officially called "In the Matter of Louis Robert Conner, a child"—a hearing to decide what should happen to Louis. Deputy District Attorney Roy Miller was there to argue that Louis should be sent to the MacLaren School—the sort of institution that used to be called a reform school, and, under ordinary circumstances, the place where a juvenile found guilty of something as serious as manslaughter would go. The defense, backed by the counsellor who had been treating Louis, argued that he should be sent home. The Deschutes County Juvenile Department, which normally comes to such hearings in agreement with the district attorney, suggested a middle course—a small, unguarded residential facility that emphasizes intensive counselling. The Juvenile Department's representative testified that the department would prefer to see Louis go home if the alternative was MacLaren, but that one disadvantage of sending him back to Sisters was that the community "might be too supportive," because "Louis is seen as a hero."

Judge Copenhaver took the middle course. He suspended a sentence to MacLaren and ruled that Louis should instead spend six months at ACCORD, a house in the countryside a few miles from Bend which is a sort of adjunct of a nearby facility called the J Bar J Boys Ranch. The day after the decision, a few people from Sisters were quoted in the Bend paper expressing disappointment that Louis had to serve any time anywhere, but a lot of people thought the judge had made a sensible choice. "I think the decision had as much to do with the community as with Louis," a lawyer who has followed the case said after the dispositional hearing. "Given the nature of the offense, it's sort of hard for a judge to say, 'Well, don't do it again,' and send Louis home. He couldn't give the message to the community, 'Go ahead and shoot these guys.' "

Susan Conner had known that a boy who killed someone was not likely to be sent home, but, partly because she had read of something like that happening in a similar case in California, she had gone to the hearing with her hopes up. "I should be really happy," she said not long after the sentencing. "I guess I am happy." Ordinarily, boys sent to ACCORD or the J Bar J Ranch have done nothing more serious than take a car that didn't happen to belong to them. ACCORD is on a few acres of land; the facilities of J Bar J, just down the road, are available. It's the sort of place that tries to take advantage of its access to the Central Oregon outdoors. There are, of course, horses at J Bar J. To build confidence, the boys do rock climbing and mountaineering. Particularly during school vacations, they're encouraged to work outdoors, for wages. In the summer, they often work for the local parks and recreation department, maintaining trails.

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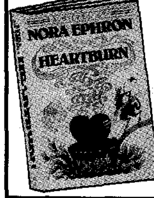

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Pairs

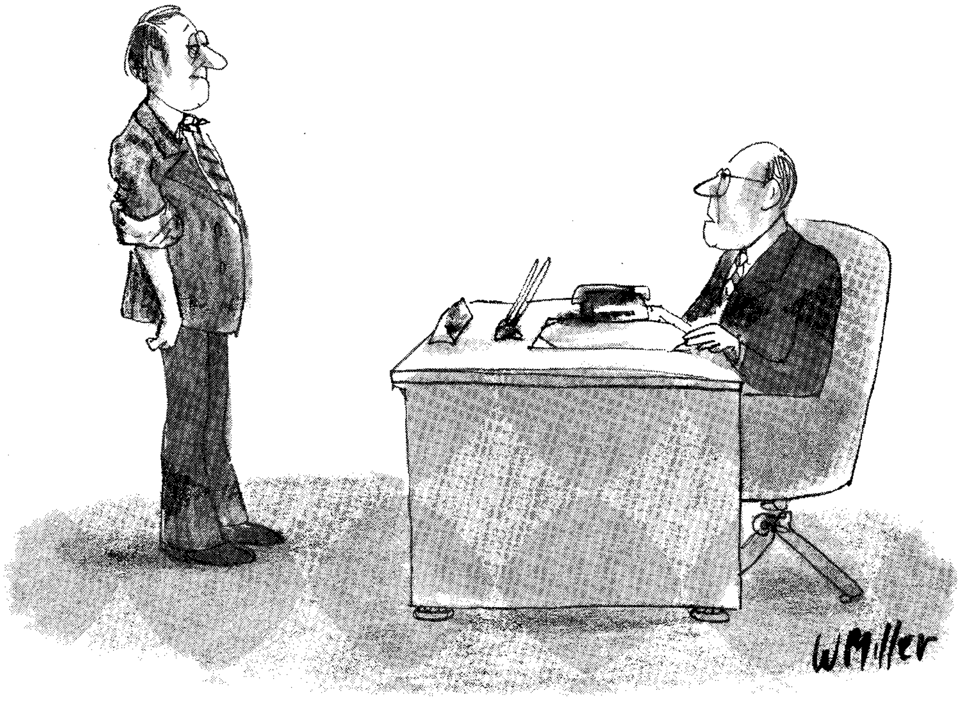
THE fire of adventure lights Andrea Martin's saucer eyes in "Club Paradise." Even if your jaw sometimes fell open when you watched her on "SCTV," you may feel that she transcends her earlier work in this first screen appearance. She has a new exuberance; she's like a funky Gracie Allen, and she has her George Burns here in tall, gloomy Steven Kampmann. They play a vacationing couple hoping to put some zest into their fading marriage: Kampmann is a slack-faced plastic surgeon who's always at least half asleep, and his vest-pocket-sized wife wants to try anything, everything. When she goes on a para-sail and she gets caught, suspended from the limb of a tree, she beats her tiny chest like Tarzan, in sheer manic joy. When she steps into a shower and the water hits her with the force of Niagara, it's a new sensation and she gives in to it. Uninhibited, she embraces every shock or calamity. Andrea Martin turns her role into something like Martha Raye's part in "Monsieur Verdoux"—she's so avidly alive that nothing fazes her. Dark and vaguely exotic (she's of Armenian descent), this inspired comedienne has happy demons inside her.

The dauntless wife and her dead-head husband take the chartered plane to Club Paradise on the mythical Caribbean island of St. Nicholas in response to travel folders that the club's new social director (Robin Williams) and his girlfriend (Twiggy) have sent out—folders that promise swank, fun-filled days and languorous, sexy nights. But the social director's advertising skills are far in advance of his ability to cajole the Rastafarian staff and musicians to get the place ready. He has to deal with brainteasers like how to devise a hat for a chef which will cover hair five feet long. So when this first planeload of guests—the eager cartoon faces are familiar from "SCTV" and "Saturday Night Live"—make their bumpy landing, and the pilot (Joe Flaherty) kisses the earth in an ecstasy of relief, they discover that the tropical resort that sounded like nirvana on the cheap is a group of tumbledown cottages, plus a frowzy café with a reggae band, headed by the owner (Jimmy Cliff). There's a beautiful stretch of beach, though.

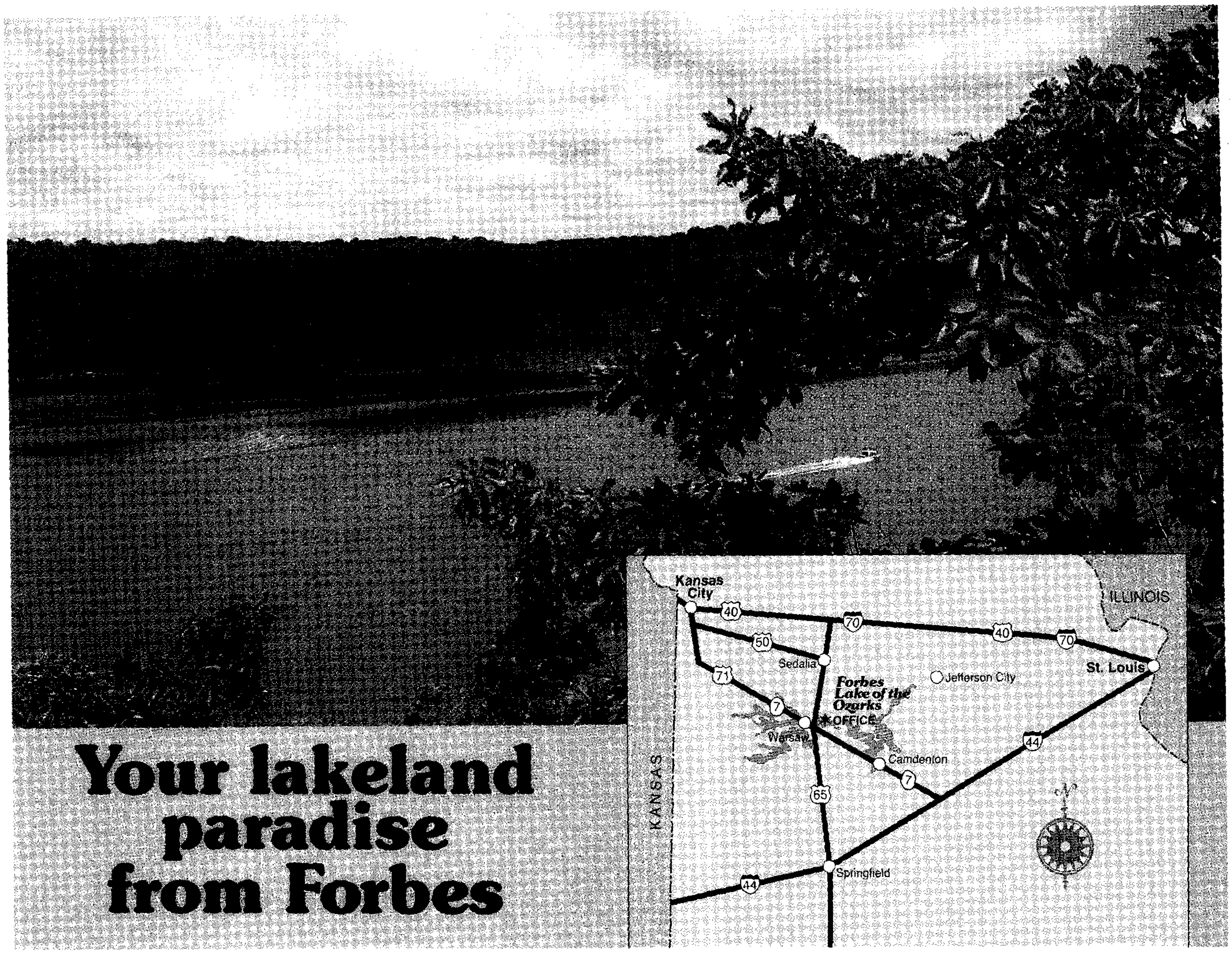
The movie is like those giddy, casual farces that Paramount turned out in the thirties—pictures like "We're Not Dressing," in which Burns and Allen, Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard, and Ethel Merman goofed around on an island. Those pictures often got terrible reviews but kept audiences giggling cheerfully, and this seems to be the case with "Club Paradise." Directed by Harold Ramis, from a script he wrote with Brian Doyle-Murray that at least two other sets of writers had had a share in earlier, "Club Paradise" has an offhand, lackadaisical ease. Apparently, members of the cast were encouraged to come up with gags and dialogue of their own (as long as they didn't improvise on camera), and this may explain why performers you've watched on TV, like Kampmann, are suddenly funnier than they've been before. Playing straight man to Andrea Martin, Kampmann might have just discovered the pleasures of silliness. When Jimmy Cliff starts a revolution on the island, and there's shooting in the café, these two avoid the bullets by squatting and doing a duck walk across the dance floor together. They're a full-fledged comedy team—one of many pairings-off here.

Eugene Levy and Rick Moranis play businessmen, both named Barry, who are obsessed by the idea of scoring with women but terrified when women come close to them. Of all the nerdlings in recent movies, these two are perhaps the most desperately ineffectual—the nerdiest. They're a nightmare pair, yet endearing—their real attachment is to being miserable together. Moranis has a great solo gag, when he's proud of himself out wind-surfing and (to the sound of lushly orchestrated surfing music) is swept out to sea. But the film's romantic high point comes when Barry and Barry are reunited and—in slow motion—they rush to embrace each other, like long-lost lovers.

As the club's social director, Robin Williams is the picture's m.c., and his role is largely reactive. He doesn't have a chance to do the kind of acting he did in "The Best of Times" or "Moscow on the Hudson," but it's surprisingly enjoyable to see him when he isn't charged up. He gives the movie a sane, low-key center. His lines are mostly asides or are given the sound of asides, and he's congenial—he has a graceful style that he adapts to each of his several partners. In the early sequences, he persuades Twiggy to leave the yachting party she arrived with and stay with him, and he does it without coming on strong. That's why she's attracted to him; he's honest and, in some unfathomable way, winning. Twiggy doesn't have running



"The fact that you've rolled up your sleeves since our last talk has been noted, Parminger. However, there's still something I'd like to discuss with you."



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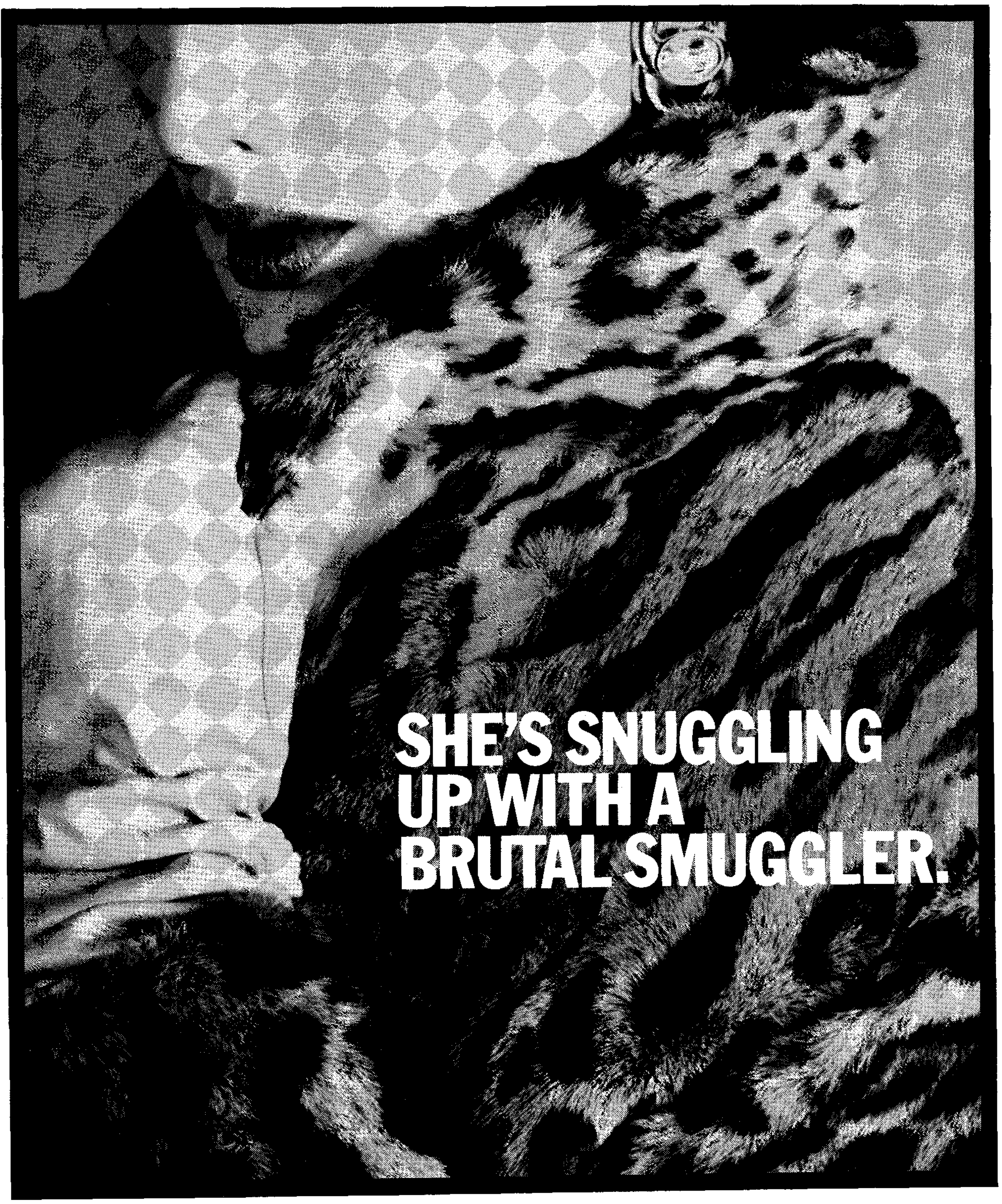

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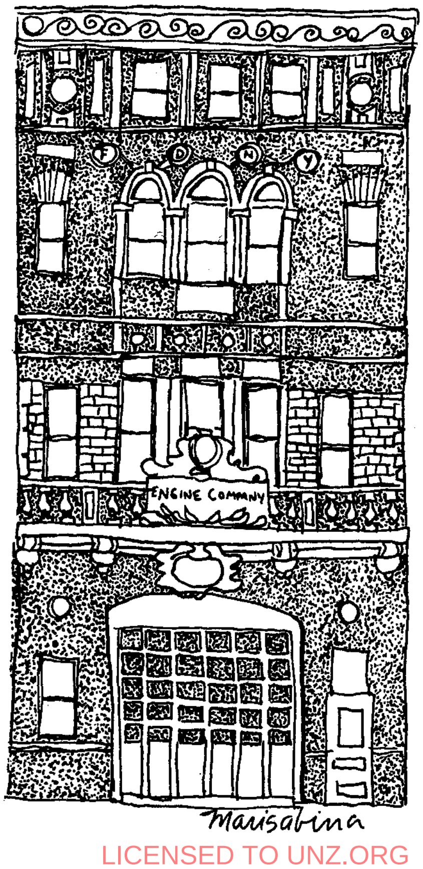
gags or terrific lines, but she does radiant double takes on Robin Williams' good lines—she's charming. In Williams' friendship and business partnership with Jimmy Cliff, it's taken for granted that we'll perceive what makes them trust each other, and we do. Perhaps most surprising is Williams' nifty teamwork with Peter O'Toole, who plays the governor-general of this flyspeck British island. When Robin Williams and the dulcet-voiced, eloquent O'Toole talk together, their two styles of acting mesh almost conspiratorially.

O'Toole has another partner, too—Joanna Cassidy, as a tough redhead who writes about resorts for the New York *Times*. She looks like nothing but trouble when we first see her, but after she meets the governor-general she lights up, and when they've become a pair and she looks at him her smile is big and dazzling. O'Toole certainly seems to have found the woman for him. She's a sexual powerhouse. There are other pairs: Robin Duke and Mary Gross as shy girls who make overtures to the Barrys; sets of male hunks and female hunks; and Brian Doyle-Murray and the late Adolph Caesar as a pair of finagling villains trying to take over the Club Paradise beachfront—they're the opposite numbers to Robin Williams and Jimmy Cliff.

The cinematography seems muddy at the opening (which is set in Chicago), but then the beach and the bright, aquamarine picture-postcard color—the island scenes were shot in Port Antonio, on the Jamaican coast—seem just right for a resort farce. (The light looks fake, which is how the light sometimes looks on ravishing beaches.) And Jimmy Cliff's songs have a relaxing, rolling rhythm that matches the lazy surf. Maybe Robin Williams took the cue for his performance from the reggae. The music doesn't come charging into your skull, like the high-pressure rock you get in most films now. And the movie itself doesn't pound or strain to impress you, either. It's tacky and unceremonious and as pleasant as can be.

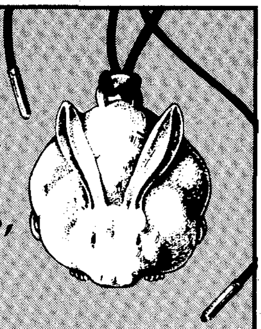
"HEARTBURN" clicks along like a very expensive watch, and though many of the scenes don't point anywhere, they give off glints of sophistication and bitchery, and they have original edges. Directed by Mike Nichols, and written by Nora Ephron, who adapted her own 1983 novel (a jokey, fictionalized version of her marriage to Carl Bernstein), the film is rich in fillips—smart little taps and strokes. And the physical surfaces are so exact and polished that you feel as if you'd been brought into a special, artificial world. The sensation is similar to what audiences used to get from "smashing" productions of drawing-room comedies. It's cleverness raised to a principle—only now it's blended with what is generally referred to as "pain." Those who saw the Mike Nichols stage production of "The Real Thing" got the whole slicked-up package. Here you get the packaging, with visibly skimpy insides.

The movie is full of talented people, who, with the exception of Meryl Streep, have almost nothing to do. She is the protagonist, Rachel, a New York food writer and divorcée who may or may not want to get married again; whichever it is, she finds Jack Nicholson's Mark, a Washington columnist who's also divorced and has a naughty reputation as a ladies' man, irresistible, and says yes. Stockard Channing and Richard Masur are exceedingly likable as Mark's oldest friends; Catherine O'Hara is a Washington newswoman and all-around gossip who breezes into the picture a few times (not as often as you might like: she looks as if she knows giggly secrets); Maureen Stapleton is Rachel's therapist, whose lips tremble with sentimentality during Rachel's wedding; Steven Hill is Rachel's acid-tongued father; Jeff Daniels, Miloš Forman, and Karen Akers also turn up; and John Wood does a sly, sweetly devastating takeoff of Alistair Cooke as host of "Masterpiece Theatre." (Wood brings us up to date on Rachel's fantasies of herself as the heroine of a literary classic.) These performers are fun to watch, but after a while the scenes that don't point anywhere begin to add up, and you start asking yourself, "What is this movie about?" You're still asking when it's over, and by then a flatness, a disappointment, is likely to have settled over the fillips you'd enjoyed.



Streep's Rachel is blissfully happy as a wife and mother until, when she's seven months pregnant with her second child, she discovers that Mark is having an affair. She leaves him and goes back to New York; he comes for her and tells her that he isn't going to see the woman anymore, and she returns. But when she learns that he has broken his word, and probably never even meant to keep it, she pushes a Key-lime pie into his face at a Washington dinner party, and the marriage is over. This may be the only pie in the face in the history of movies that's flung more in sorrow than in anger. It's a bad mistake.

If the movie is no more than a semi-satirical view of a modern woman's ancient plight—that her husband is unfaithful—why isn't it more fun? In the book, Nora Ephron wants the hipness of treating Rachel's failed marriage as wiseass comedy; she wants us to feel the pain under the self-mockery, but the laughs are always on top. Though Ephron is a gifted and witty light essayist, her novel is no more than a variant of a princess fantasy: Rachel, the wife, is blameless; Mark, the husband, is simply a bad egg—an adulterer. And, reading the book, you don't have to take Rachel the bratty narrator very seriously; her self-pity is so thinly masked by humor and unabashed mean-spiritedness that you feel that the author is exploiting her life—trashing it by presenting it as a juicy, fast-action comic strip about a marriage of celebrities. Mike Nichols takes much of the cheapness out of the material, but the gossipy kick has gone out, too. Working with the cinematographer Nestor Almendros, he tries to make the story seem real; he shoots it in a tight, airless, neutral style. And with the heroine's life no longer treated as rowdy comedy, and the "pain" brought to the surface, the effect is like



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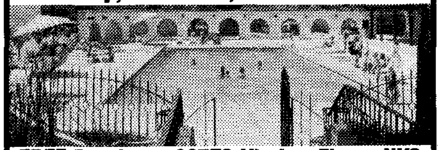

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a weak mixture of "Carnal Knowledge" and a Woody Allen picture and Robert Benton's "Kramer vs. Kramer." It's anorexic moviemaking.

In the film, Rachel and Mark first spot each other when they're guests at a wedding. He looks at her boldly—rudely. She turns to a friend and asks who he is. The friend tells her, and she asks, "Is he single?" The audience laughs, because we've just been given what we think is a direct pipeline to what's on Rachel's mind. And, as if to make her longings unmistakable, her eyes fill with tears during the ceremony. But a few scenes later, when it's Rachel and Mark's wedding day and the guests have arrived, everyone has to wait for Rachel, who hides out in a bedroom. She stays there for a long time, having doubts about whether marriage—*any* marriage—works; friends, relatives, her therapist all try to coax her to come out and march down the aisle, but she's absorbed in her Cassandra act until Mark finally stretches out on the bed next to her and convinces her. This not-wanting-to-get-married scene isn't directed comically as a celebrity princess's showing off her trepidation to the assembled crowd. The way the scene is directed, it could be taken as an indication that Rachel really doesn't want to get married, and that makes it a princess screenwriter's ploy. It was during this episode, with its cutaways to such random bits as two men caterers whiling away the time by discussing a recipe, that it first occurred to me that Mike Nichols didn't really know what he was doing and that the picture wasn't going to work. This was confirmed in the humdrum scenes about the renovation being done on the couple's Georgetown house, in the limpness of the reconciliation scene after Rachel leaves Mark for the first time, and in details, such as the way their infant is handled like a prop, and in the attempted poignancy of the closing mother-child theme music—Carly Simon's own version of "The Itsy Bitsy Spider."

A different screenwriter—one who approached the job of adaptation from the outside—might have treated the novel as a black comedy about two celebrity hustlers falling in love (mostly with each other's reputations) and trying to out-hustle each other, until the man is unfaithful to his wife with a socialite celebrity who outranks her. If this hardboiled screenwriter had carried the comedy through, it might have included Rachel's getting even: the publication of her book, and its being made into a movie. (Carl Bernstein had already been made a hero by the book and movie "All the President's Men.") That's perhaps too harsh a satirical scenario. But Nichols and Ephron have come up with one that's soft and muffled. In the film, Rachel and Mark aren't even the heavy spenders they are in the book; they live more modestly. Mike Nichols decided to make "Heartburn" and then started looking for depth! So he tried to make the two more sympathetic, and he wound up without a story.

Nichols' technique—his moving the camera in for each significant nuance—makes us unduly conscious of the acting, and how studied it is. He turns us into connoisseurs of performance instead of giving us a grasp of character, and the movie appears to be about nothing except the signals and mannerisms that actors work up. Every twitch of Streep's seems to be recorded in closeup, and every shade of Nicholson's untrustworthiness is pinpointed. Except for a few showy scenes, Nicholson has so little to do that glowering or ambiguous expressions are almost all we get from him. The movie is about Rachel's heartburn, not Mark's; we don't know how he feels about anything, and he looks a little too middle-aged and confident. Streep's flair for comedy comes through intermittently, and if we had caught what she was doing out of the corner of an eye she might have come across as a funny woman. But her Rachel seems, finally, a joyless performance. Streep can't chew a bite of food without acting out chewing. And Nichols kills her with admiration.

Nichols' methods work for the lesser, purely comic roles here, but we see Streep and Nicholson in an assortment of moments, with nothing holding the moments together. Nichols seems to be trying to guarantee that each fragment will be perfect, and that we in the audience will see exactly what he wants us to see. That, I'm afraid, is all we see, and we feel starved.

"ALIENS" is a very big "Boo!" movie. Long (two hours and seventeen minutes) and visually repetitious, this sci-fi action-horror film is scaled to be an epic, and it's certainly getting epic reviews. ("An authentic masterpiece!" "The scariest movie in the history of movies." "The most satisfying science-fiction shocker ever." And so on.) The writer-director James Cameron pumps up the familiar devices of the action and horror genres, and is acclaimed for imagination. (The praise suggests the Second Coming of John Carpenter.) An inflated example of formula gothic, this sequel to Ridley Scott's 1979 "Alien" is more mechanical than the first film—more addicted to "advanced" weaponry and military hardware. The movie is really a combat film set in the future, in space; Cameron pits a platoon of United States Marines (ethnically assorted, of course) against a family of monsters. He does it in an energetic, systematic, relentless way, with an action director's gusto. And though he writes bum dialogue, his images have a fair amount of graphic power; the movie has the look of a comic book for adults, and it achieves a fairy-tale horror when the queen monster looms up waving her tentacles, opening her metal jaws, and gnashing her switchblade teeth. She represents extraterrestrial primal evil, which might seem to be enough menace for one movie, but, to raise the ante, Cameron throws in the threat of a nuclear explosion.

As Warrant Officer Ripley, the only human survivor of the spaceship Nostromo, which voyaged forth in the earlier film, Sigourney Weaver is the one person who has looked into the face of evil and lived, but she's stricken with recurrent nightmares and the cold shakes. Weaver uses the trauma of this experience as the basis for creating what passes here for a character. Weaver's Ripley is different from other people: she's more intense; an angry, high-strung loner, she has been through too much horror to have any patience with small talk—she gets right to the point of things. Made consultant to a new expedition to the monsters' planet—its mission is to find out what happened to the human colonizers who have gone there—she sees that those in charge are lightweights, brushes them aside, and takes command. With her great cheekbones, her marvellous physique, and her lightness of movement, Weaver seems to take over by natural authority and her strength as an actress. Her surprisingly small, tense mouth holds all the suspense in the story. She's concentrating on the problems at hand when nobody else is. Weaver gives the movie a presence; without her it's a B picture that lacks the subplots and corny characters that can make B pictures amusing.

Cameron does include some B gimmicks, such as showing a crew member (Michael Biehn) training Weaver in the use of a huge, heavy gun and taking pride in her prowess with it. (This is the closest that the movie comes to romance.) And Cameron plays a few B games, such as having a Hispanic woman bodybuilder (Jenette Goldstein) among the roughhousing, muscular fighting Marines. (She wears a red headband, like a guerrilla.) But except for Weaver the film is short on inventive acting, and I would have thought that Cameron (who directed the Schwarzenegger picture "The Terminator," and wrote the script for "Rambo: First Blood Part II" before Stallone reshaped it) would be too embarrassed to toss in the wraithlike, fey little girl, Newt (Carrie Henn), the survivor of the human colony on the deadly planet. Cameron actually gives Newt a forlorn remnant of a doll, so that it can float in brackish liquid when she has been captured. She is the kind of child you meet only in movies, where they're used to give plots some sentimental propulsion. Newt is out there in space to arouse Ripley's maternal instinct. That way Ripley's final confrontation with the toothy monster will be the Battle of the Big Mamas.

"Alien," with its horrible mutating creature (you never knew what form it would take), made you dread the scenes to come; it tied your innards in a knot. "Aliens" isn't that scary. There's an awful lot of claustrophobic blue-green dankness in the outpost that the colonists lived in, and when we see a tantalizing image, such as the Marines trying to find their way through a cavernous structure that looks like a sleeping giant's rib cage, the scene just leads to the use of battle weapons. Cameron is not a man for magic; he's more confident when he's showing off an armored personnel carrier or a cargo-handling machine with clumping feet. When Sigourney Weaver loads up with an arsenal of flame-shooting equipment and goes forth to fight the queen, she's no more than a smart Rambo. This movie has clumping feet. —PAULINE KAEL

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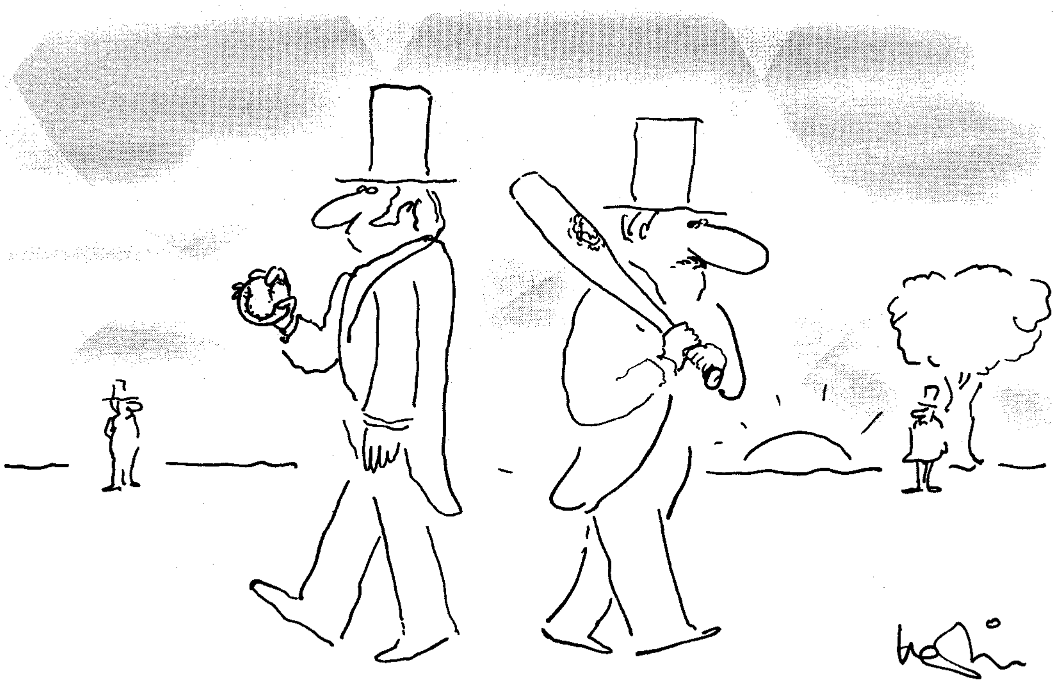
MUSICAL EVENTS

Fundamentals

THE June *Musical Times* has an arresting essay, by the Wagner biographer Barry Millington, entitled "Saucepans of Spaghetti: A Semiology of Opera Criticism." Mr. Millington's starting point is London critics' mockery of the English National Opera's new production of "Parsifal," directed by Joachim Herz, and the Royal Opera's of "The Flying Dutchman," directed by Mike Ashman. He calls much of what they wrote "thoughtless jibes," "abusive superficial description." Wolf Münzner's design for Act II of "Parsifal," which they described as "a bowl of pink rags," "a basket of jelly babies," to him "brilliantly suggested an artificial paradise, set apart from the world," which Parsifal could step outside "in a striking visualization of the character's mental torment as he struggles to free himself from the temptations of Kundry." The critics, he complains, didn't wonder *why* Herz and his designer had made the enchanted flower garden so ugly. (I, who didn't see the show, wonder why, if the garden was so ugly, Parsifal should have found it tempting.) Mr. Millington's general points about "fidelity to the composer" and his claim that "the modern producer who brings his or her conception to the fore is acting in full accordance with the principle of music drama" set me thinking, and, even, examining my conscience. I've been reproached for critical inconsistency: for lauding productions by Wieland Wagner, Peter Sellars, David Pountney that departed far from the composer's stage directions, and deploring productions by Patrice Chéreau, Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, Andrei Serban, Liviu Ciulei that did the same. But there are distinctions to be made. Not all "modern" stagings use the same tactics. Not all classics are equally amenable to updating. Mr. Millington charges music critics with "a hankering after literalism," with wanting "respectful, neutral stagings." That wasn't what I had in mind when, recently, I called Ciulei's production of "Wozzeck," for the Welsh National Opera, "tin-eared." In similar vein, the London critic Max Loppert wrote after Covent Garden's recent "Fidelio," directed by Serban, "I would say that the man who produced this 'Fidelio' is deaf to the music, to its workings and meanings."

Fidelity to a creator and to his work when that work must be brought to life before a contemporary audience is a difficult concept. It was raised in acute form by two shows at PepsiCo Summerfare, at Purchase, which has become New York's most vital summer festival. Both were eighteenth-century classics: Schiller's "Die Räuber" (1780), which is perhaps the most influential play ever written, and Mozart's "Così Fan Tutte" (1790). Both were performed in stagings that would have astonished their creators. "Die Räuber" has been a test piece for an ancient work's "relevance" ever since Erwin Piscator's celebrated 1926 production. Schiller's play was much cut and radically refocussed, and some critics thought Piscator was on the wrong track: "One cannot deep-freeze warm classics as Piscator has done; what is required is not variants of Coriolanus and Karl Moor [Schiller's protagonist], altered in form and content until they are aesthetically unrecognizable, but quite simply new plays from new authors" (Bernhard Diebold). But Piscator drew up six Fundamental Principles for the revitalization of classical drama, "which will enable us to face the future unresigned and full of hope." No. 3 states that a director "cannot be a mere 'servant of the work,' since the work itself is not something rigid and final." He must be "the servant and exponent of his times," and find a point of view determined neither by "gratuitous cleverness" nor willfully. No. 4 states that, while a director's standpoint may be either artistically or ideologically determined, an artistic standpoint will be "purely external" and "lose itself in a myriad of fortuitous combinations." These are defined in No. 5 as originating in "speculation on financial success, on public recognition, on personal originality," and in "a retreat into 'solutions' that are mere nuances." Without subscribing in full to Piscator's arguments, a critic can join him in denouncing updated productions of the classics which are merely clever, ingenious, novel, and must deplore those which may be honestly but are not intelligently or perceptively conceived. "Let's set it in Little Italy/in modern Greece/on the moon" and "Let's pretend it was all Tamino's/Violetta's/the Steersman's dream" are not recipes for automatic revitalization. They are, however, devices that—when the work permits—a director may well use to further his deeper aim.

Thirty-one years later, in Mannheim, Piscator directed "Die Räuber" again—this time, we are told, with special emphasis on the long monologues that in 1926 he had shredded. Then, in 1963, in Florence, he directed "I Masnadieri," the opera that Andrea Maffei and Verdi



made from "Die Räuber." It wasn't good. It taught lessons about differences between a spoken play and a music drama which many directors have still to learn. Paul Walter, the designer, had repeated the empty stage and the three tall, steep staircases of the Mannheim production: bare scaffolding amid hints of trees for the robbers, formal steps for the Moor castle, a towering central flight for Karl's spectacular entrance. Up and down the singers went. The audience felt uneasy, and the soprano, Margherita Roberti, seemed uneasy as, in a long dress, she negotiated at once very difficult music and precipitous unrailed steps. In 1926, according to a contemporary review, Piscator's robbers "erupted onto the stage to pulsing jazz rhythms, punctuated by the 'Internationale,' " and their "disciplined tumult . . . had the audience on the edge of their seats, exhilarated, involved." In Florence, during Verdi's bandit choruses they marked time to the music with an effect more comic than stirring—especially when the music slipped into waltz time.

A great dramatic composer is likely to be to some extent his own stage director. He determines tone and timing, prescribes the inflections and emphases of the drama. A Verdi, a Wagner, a Berg has also visualized the stage actions and on occasion set them to music so precisely that making a wrong move or making the right move at the wrong moment will be as noticeable as singing a wrong note or making a wrong vocal entry. A director who works within such a composer's prescriptions should feel no more "inhibited" than does the singer who sings the right notes, adding her own musical inventions only in places where the composer invites her to do so. The director has greater—but not limitless—freedom.

The Purchase "Räuber" was played by the troupe of the Bochum Schauspielhaus, directed by Alfred Kirchner. About half of Schiller's text was used. (The show, with one intermission, ran for three and a half hours; for America it had been somewhat shortened. Piscator's 1926 production ran for only two hours.) The tumid rhetoric, the pages-long monologues were abbreviated or omitted. Delivery was clipped, emphatic, incisive; there were no rolling, relished periods. Athletic pantomimes were inserted; Mahler, Beethoven, Brahms, and Philip Glass were drawn on for incidental music. The heroine, Amalia, was played by a young man. Period ranged freely between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries: white wigs popped on and off; the robbers went raiding in a beat-up truck. It was a stunningly efficient, if at times modish, evening of theatre, and it set one thinking about the violent play that once inflamed Europe. (I first encountered "Die Räuber" in Chapter 28 of "Jane Eyre," where Diana and Mary thrill to the sound of it, although they need a German dictionary to puzzle out its sense. Purchase considerately provided a simultaneous translation through headphones.) Much more could be said. A music critic's point is that the lively Bochum approach could not successfully be taken to Verdi's opera. On the simplest level, no young man, however gifted a falsettist, could compass music that Verdi composed for Jenny Lind. More generally, a spoken text can sustain transformations that would destroy a music drama already embodying the composer's particular, personal interpretation of the play. The point should be obvious. It will need making so long as eminent directors (Chéreau with the Bayreuth "Ring," Ciulei with the Welsh "Wozzeck") direct, however brilliantly, just the librettos of operas, and not the operas themselves.

"DEEDS of music made visible," Wagner's phrase for his music dramas, is a good phrase, too, for Peter Sellars' operatic productions. In the Purchase "Così," his performers gave convincing physical shape to the phrases of Mozart's score, creating solo and ensemble imagery that was appropriate and beautiful. The donnée of Mozart's plot—that two young women don't recognize their lovers when they come wooing in false whiskers and Albanian costume—had been scrapped. The mysterious ambiguities of the opera—its intricate play of make-believe and utter seriousness—yielded to a clear, unambiguous presentation of emotional quicksands. An invented Alfonso-Despina relationship figured largely in Sellars' plot. Dorabella's flighty "È amore un ladroncello" was replaced by the poignant "Vado, ma dove?" (which Mozart composed for Louise Villeneuve, the first Dorabella, to sing in a Martín opera); the character was deepened, altered. There were many good jokes—some intrinsic, others springing incidentally from the setting in Despina's diner-by-the-sea—but the emotional tension was constantly high,

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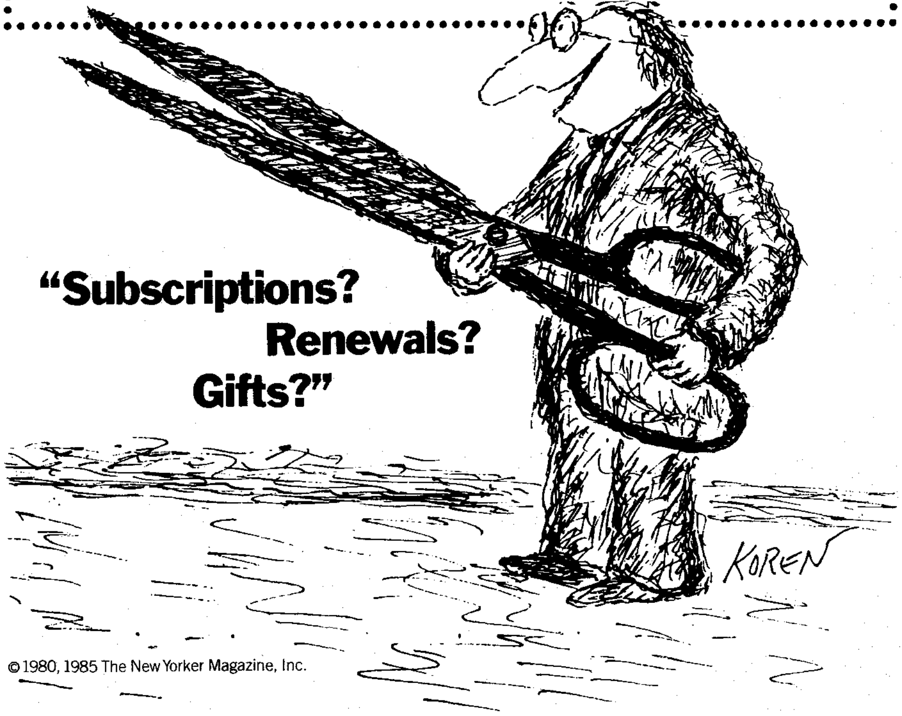
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and as a result the affective peaks of the opera ("Fra gli amplessi," the Fiordiligi-Ferrando duet, for one) had less than their usual prominence. This was a "Così" that kept its listeners on the heights—caught up in each turn of the plot, rapt in the revelations of the score. Sellars had directed the score rather than the libretto. He brought onto the stage—"underlined" is perhaps not too strong—all the marvels that he found there; left nothing unexplained; tweaked and twisted the plain sense of the words when it didn't match his perceptions of the music. I can understand resistance to this "Così" as easily as my surrender to it. In any event, it was opera on a level of seriousness, intensity, and passionate, spirited achievement very different from the New York norm—long and lovingly rehearsed, expertly designed (setting by Adrianne Lobel, costumes by Dunya Ramicova) and lit (by James Ingalls). It played in a six-hundred-and-seventy-seat theatre.

The production was based on and developed from one in Castle Hill two years ago, and, in the director's words, it "goes much further." Susan Larson (Fiordiligi), Sue Ellen Kuzma (Despina), James Maddalena (Guglielmo), and Sanford Sylvan (Don Alfonso) played their roles even more vividly than before. There was a warm, winning new Dorabella, Janice Felty, and a clear, stylish, ardent Ferrando, Frank Kelley. (In a deliberately tendentious program note, Sellars observed that "the baldness of the composer's own tortured self-portrait as Ferrando makes one wonder what combination of desperation and coldness and dread it must have taken to invite his wife to the premiere.") The band was the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, which played beautifully, on period instruments: Sellars described "the darker, clearer aspects of the new staging" as "consonant with the darkling, awake and gritty colorations of our new orchestra." Craig Smith was a devoted—but once or twice too lingering—conductor.

BESIDES "Die Räuber" and "Così," PepsiCo Summerfare presented theatre troupes from Cracow (directed by Andrzej Wajda), Mexico City, Minneapolis (directed by Ciulei), and Galway; five dance companies; and copious, carefully planned concerts of Haydn's music. Six theatres and halls on the SUNY campus, where the festival is held, were kept busy. —ANDREW PORTER

BOOKS

The New England

John Mortimer, who is well known for his diverting memoir “Clinging to the Wreckage,” is the son of a barrister, whose blindness enhanced his performances at the bar. The son also trained for the bar but turned novelist, then playwright and scriptwriter; like many lawyers, he has a natural talent for the detective story. In his latest novel, “Paradise Postponed” (Viking; $17.95), the element of detection is doubled. There is no body in the library, but there *is* an inexplicable will. The real body is the state of English society and *mœurs* from 1945 to the rise of Thatcherism and the Falklands War. At the center of the story is one of those ancient, charming, and very deceiving southern English villages. Its manor house is ruled by a raffish old lady of the jazz age and her horsy husband. The village has become urbanized; farm laborers are scarce. What appears to be a medieval great barn is an indoor swimming pool and has a sauna. Most of the inhabitants are commuters to London offices. The rector is no sleepy Trollopean churchman but an early Socialist, who, like his quiet wife, got his social conscience from the “mad” *New Statesman*. One son is a scriptwriter who has been a success in Hollywood. The other is a doctor with a sideline in jazz; he plays drums in a group called the Stompers. On the face of it, Mr. Mortimer is updating, say, the pessimistic Trollope of “The Way We Live Now,” not the cozy Trollope of Barchester.

Simeon Simcox, the rector, is in his eighties and on his deathbed. He is still a turbulent figure in left-wing politics, and worrying to his bishop. Simeon has a bust of Karl Marx in his study, is dubious about God, and is a conscientious public nuisance. He storms in the press; he has led demonstrations protesting against nuclear rearmament, and hates to be tolerated. His family and half the village think he is a saint; the rest see him as a rabble-rouser.

Now he dies, and we see a group of the main characters attending one of those bracing British funerals notable for undercurrents and for what will go wrong. It is a bit odd, for example, that one son’s divorced wife should turn up and seem to study the clothes of her successor—an incident that an older generation would have called “inconvenient.” But the rector’s wife sees something far worse than the peculiarity of modern morals: among the flowers there is a preposterously extravagant and vulgar wreath. It has been sent by a self-important, dressy young man, the Right Honorable Leslie Titmuss, M.P., a distasteful Thatcherite and member of the Cabinet. The family has known Titmuss since he was employed by them as an odd-job boy at the rectory, the son of a clerk at the famous local brewery owned by the rector’s forebears. (The ill-paid rector had drawn a helpful income from his inheritance of family shares in Simcox Ales.) Even as a naïve yet insinuating boy, Leslie Titmuss had been a climber; now the journalists and cameramen who surround him ask why he, a rising Tory, has risked his career by being seen at a notorious Socialist’s funeral. No problem, says Titmuss smoothly: the rector was such an influence and so kind to him when he was a lad. We then come to the will. The rector has left all his fortune to this Tory outsider. The widow says nothing. The sons are outraged. The elder son calls in lawyers to say that the absurd will must be fought; but it can be fought only on the ground that the rector was senile or insane. No, says the younger son, there must be some other reason, and for the rest of a long novel we see him playing detective in search of a rational motive. In the course of his search, we see the Old England and the New, with its now jumbled-up class system, in which servants go up in the world and marry into the gentry, and a Titmuss will shrewdly rise to the top—the vast changes of manners and morals of the past forty years. We see new delinquencies, new offhand habits in love, and we hear gems of New-speak in “the century of the common man,” such as the words of a patient putting a doctor in his place: “He [the man’s father] was totally orientated to his career at the BBC. He was unsupportive to my mother and to us as a nuclear family.”

The search for the rector’s strange motive when he made his will presents Mr. Mortimer with the difficulty of moving from the present to what his characters have been doing in the last forty years. The reader is at first lost in a maze of flashbacks. A Victorian novelist would not have been so fluid; he would have moralized his way through past circumstance, building as

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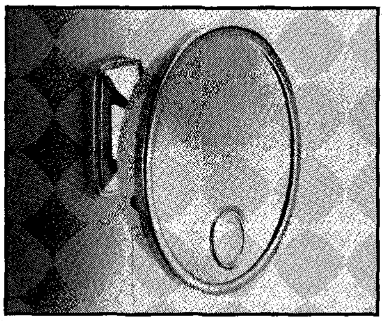
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he went. Mr. Mortimer has chosen the speedier, leapfrogging skills of the scriptwriter and the television camera. We are viewers rather than readers. In this respect, “Paradise Postponed” is like, say, “Dynasty,” a story that moves backward as it moves forward, but without the money and the fashion show. We shall know more about the insinuating Titmuss when we see him as a rising youth—things like the expression on his face as his mother puts him into his non-U jacket and ready-made bow tie before he goes hopefully to his first Tory rally on the Thames. That ready-made bow tie will provoke the rowdy “true Blues” to throw him into the river—an obvious lesson to an “awful grammar school cad.” We shall see a comic account of the grotesque public school where the Simcox boys have been sent—it is called Knuckleberries—and where the rector himself was educated. There we shall meet a shrewd boy called Nubble, who does a profitable black-market trade in expensive pâtés bought at Fortnum & Mason. Nubble will have his use later on in the son's pursuit of the rector's motive. We shall see mysterious notes bought from a private detective, and rummagings in attics in search of letters. There is the mystery of the rector forbidding his sons to talk to the local poacher of deer and rabbits in his broken-down shack in the woods. We see the rector at another time making a pastoral call on the dilapidated Lady Grace, at the manor, at an unlucky moment when her neglected daughter, Charlotte, is screaming hysterically. The good rector leads the girl to her bed, and quietens her by reading a thrilling children's book to her. Years crawl by, and she will make a loveless marriage and will join the crowds of protesting women who day and night are camped outside the local nuclear-missile base. She is the one really tragic figure of a novel that elsewhere leaves people braced, once more, by keeping a stiff upper lip. Mr. Mortimer is a ubiquitous and ingenious narrator and moralist as he parcels out his scores of allusive shots. One incidental aspect of the solution of the mystery will appeal to accountants.

—V. S. PRITCHETT

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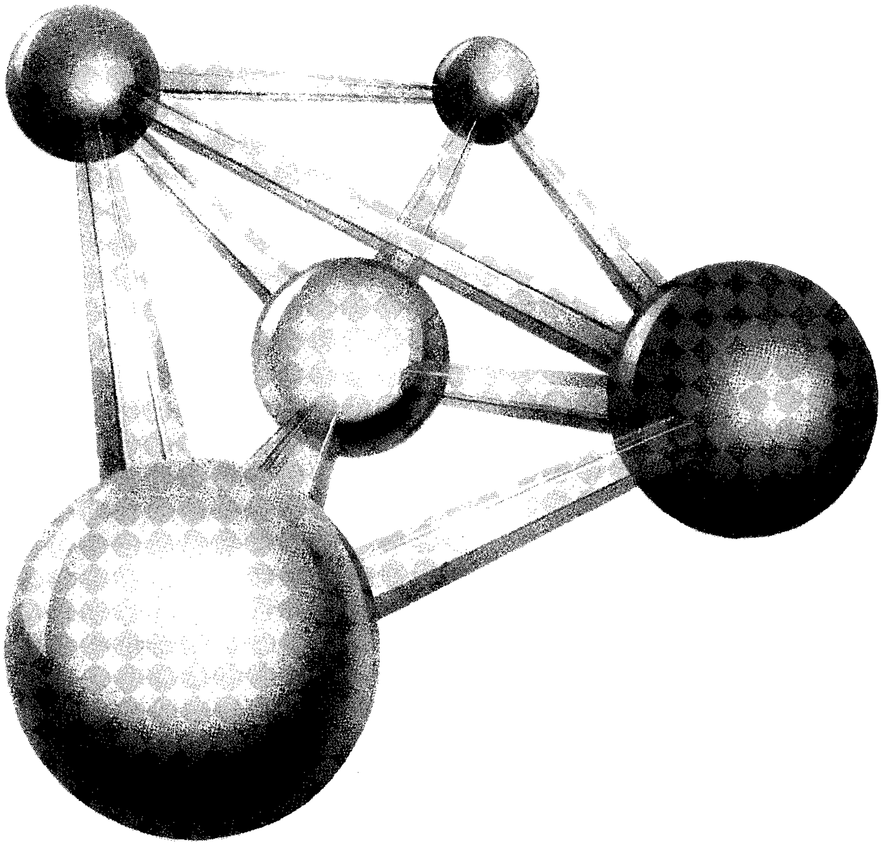

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